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AN  
HISTORICAL ACCOUNT  
—  
OF

**Kirkstall Abbey,**

YORKSHIRE,

ARCHITECTURAL AND ARCHÆOLOGICAL ;

WITH THE

LIVES OF ITS ABBOTS,

*From the Foundation to the Dissolution of the House.*

---

BY

**JAMES WARDELL,**

*Author of "The Municipal History of the Borough of Leeds," "The Antiquities of the Borough of Leeds," "Poems, Historical and Sacred," "Tradesmen's Tokens relating to Yorkshire," "A Tour along the Roman Wall," "Historical Notices of Ilkley, &c. Member of the Royal Archæological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Yorkshire Archæological and Topographical Association.*

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*Sixth Edition.*

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EDITED AND REVISED BY

W. M. NELSON, F.R.H.S., M.S.S.; M.R.A.S., BELG.,  
&c., &c., &c.

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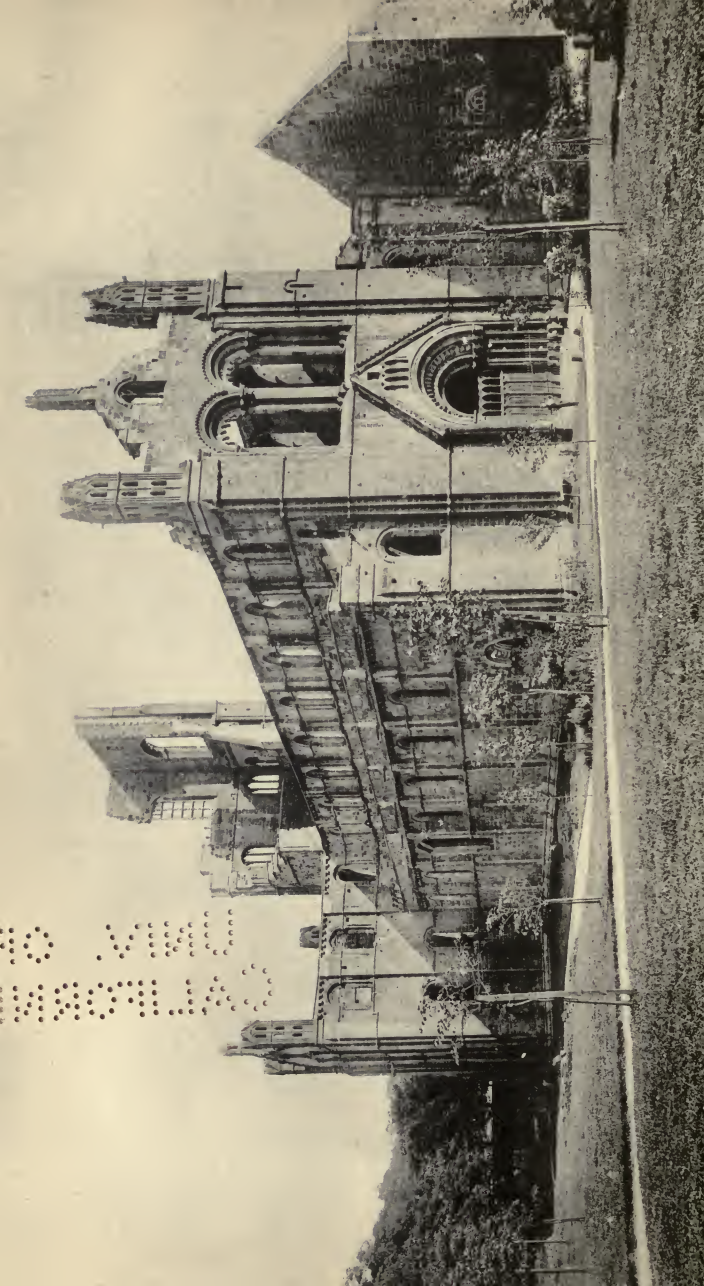
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NEW YORK



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# Kirkstall Abbey.

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## SECTION I.

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he Cistercian Abbey of Kirkstall, situate on the River Aire, in one of the most romantic valleys in England, at about three miles from the large manufacturing town of Leeds, is perhaps the best known monastic ruin in Yorkshire, and is surpassed by none in picturesque beauty or architectural and antiquarian interest. The monastic order to which it belonged had its origin at Cisteaux, in France, in the early part of the 12th century. The first monastery of the order founded in England was at Rievaulx, in the most romantic part of the East Riding. The Kirkstall community, however, was instituted first at Bernoldswic by a colony of monks, of the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary, at York. The Prior, Sub-Prior, and several brethren desirous of a stricter rule, left that community, and founded a branch of the severer order at Bernoldswic, in



Craven, having for some time previously become the temporary inmates of the Abbey of Fountains. Henry de Lacy, grandson of Ilbert de Lacy, a leader in the army of William I., and Lord of the extensive Honor and Castle of Pontefract, having in sickness made a vow that on his recovery he would dedicate an Abbey to the Blessed Virgin, sent for the pious and self-denying Abbot of Fountains, and to him the grateful and repentant chieftain assigned, by charter, the vill of Bernoldswic, in Craven, for the purposes of the proposed foundation. The Abbot received the gift, and forthwith caused the necessary offices to be erected on the estate for the reception of a suitable colony of monks; and the whole proceedings were confirmed by Henry Murdac, Archbishop of York. On the 14th of the kalends of June, (19th May,) 1147, according to the regulations of the order, ALEXANDER, Prior of Fountains, who was then elected Abbot, with twelve monks and ten lay brethren, departed from the parent house for their future home, the name of which was appropriately changed to *Mount St. Mary*. The establishment however, did not prosper; the monks on taking possession of the vill, wished to retain it entirely in their own hands, and to effect this object most unwisely ejected the inhabitants, and demolished the parish church, for the reason that it was situate near to the newly-established monastery, and the resort of the people to it interfered with the quiet and comfort of the monks. This harsh and injudicious mode of procedure gave rise to legal proceedings before the Archbishop, and, eventually, before the Pope, who decided in favour of the monks, because it seemed

to him just that a church should fall, provided an abbey should be constructed for it,—that a lesser good should give way to a greater,—and that part should be preferred which should produce the richest fruits of piety. It is but justice to the monks to state that another church was erected by them, at a greater distance from the monastery than the one demolished by their orders: yet these matters, as might have been expected, produced ill-feeling on the part of the people, and some retaliation, which with the frequent plundering of their goods, the failure of their crops, and the inclemency of the climate, at length induced them ardently to desire a more peaceful and sheltered place for the permanent erection of the monastery.

The Abbot having occasion to travel on business connected with his house, happened to pass through the valley of the Aire, in a secluded part of which, on the northern side of the river, some pious anchorites had taken up their abode, and perceiving at once the beauty and advantages of the situation, he enquired of them their manner of living, the form of their religion, and from whence they had come. One of them, named Seleth, who was their head, answered him, “I was born in the southern part of this kingdom. A revelation from heaven being made to me, I came hither, for when I was in the land of my nativity, a voice came to me during sleep, saying, ‘Arise, Seleth, and go into the province of York, and search diligently for a valley which is called Airedale, and a certain place which is called Kirkstall, and there provide a future habitation for brethren to serve my son.’ I said, ‘Tell me, I pray thee, who is thy son.’ She said,

“ ‘I am Mary, and my son is called Jesus of Nazareth,  
“ ‘the Saviour of the world.’ Awaking, I considered  
“ what I should do concerning the revelation made  
“ to me, and then casting my hope on the Lord,  
“ left my home and domestics, nothing doubting,  
“ and hastily departed. She who called me leading  
“ to this valley, which thou seest I have not reached  
“ without difficulty. But first I learned from the  
“ shepherds and herdsmen, that this place, in which  
“ we now dwell, was called Kirkstall. I was alone  
“ for many days, feeding on roots and herbs, and  
“ the alms which the neighbouring people charitably  
“ administered to me. Afterwards, those brethren,  
“ whom thou seest, joined themselves to me, holding  
“ me for their ruler and master. We live after the  
“ form of the brethren of Serath, having all things  
“ in common, and seeking food and clothing by the  
“ labour of our hands.” The Abbot proceeded to  
admonish the brethren as to the welfare of their  
souls, their small number, and their being laymen  
without a priest, and concluded by advising a  
stricter form of religion, and greater perfection to  
them. On leaving the place he repaired to his  
patron, and laid before him the present poverty and  
distress of the establishment, informed him of the  
desirable spot he had found, and asked for his  
approval and assistance for their removal to it.  
Henry de Lacy not only approved of the proposed  
step, but obtained from William de Poictou, the  
owner of that portion of Airedale, a grant thereof in  
perpetuity for the purposes required, at the annual  
rent of five marks. De Poictou appears to have  
given his consent readily, and the intercourse which  
took place on this occasion, between these feudal



chiefs, seems to have been the means of extinguishing some enmity which had previously existed between them. The Abbot having thus secured this commodious place, and profiting doubtless by his previous experience, made equitable terms with the anchorites for its possession, some of whom agreed to remain and join the order, and the others being satisfied in respect of their claims, took their departure. He then proceeded to clear the ground, and to erect a temporary church, with such buildings as were requisite for immediate accommodation: and on the 14th of the kalends of June (19th May), 1152, after a residence of five years of privation and suffering, the colony left Bernoldswic for their recently-acquired habitation, the former one being converted into a grange for the supply of the new monastery. It will be observed that the date of the departure of the brotherhood from Fountains to Bernoldswic, and from the latter place to Kirkstill, is on the same day of the month, rendering it possible that there may have been design in this coincidence, the monks observing the day of their separation from their parent house with a certain amount of respect as the commencement of their independent existence.

In the preceding legendary account of the founding of the house, it is related that Seleth learned from the shepherds that the place was called "Kirkstall," while in the ancient Chronicle it is stated that the Abbot called the monastery by that name. These statements are clearly at variance with each other, and at this length of time after the occurrence related, it would be fruitless to attempt to reconcile them; yet a similar circumstance

occurs in the history of the Abbey of Meaux.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Whitaker is very severe upon the monks for what he terms their "falsehood" and "inconsistency" in the matter, and states that he has reason to believe that for some time the monastery was called after the name of the township in which it stands, for in a very early charter in the Bodleian library, relating to this house, is the attestation, "Monacho de Hedinleia."<sup>2</sup>

I may state that there are no remains of the early monastery existing at Bernoldswic. The buildings probably consisted of little more than a small church, and the requisite offices for the brethren, and would be constructed principally of timber, but the traces of occupation are, however, still distinguishable in a field which rises gently from the northern bank of a rivulet on the west side of the village, known by the name of the "Monk's Rood," and close by which is a spring of water called "St. Mary's Well." Though the inmates of this home in the wilderness have long since departed, and the grass waves over the deserted place, yet I felt a melancholy pleasure in visiting the site of the humble abode which first gave shelter to the ancient fathers of the house of Kirkstall. The Church of Bernoldswic, erected by the monks in place of the old parochial one demolished by their orders, as already related, is dedicated to St. Mary, and is situate in a silent and retired place, near to a deep valley or "gill," from which circumstance it derives its name of "Gill-kirk." Some alterations have been made in the original building, but its venerable appearance is not des-

1 *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, vol. I., *Pref.* p. xv., 76 and 77.

2 *History of Craven*, page 62. *Note.*

troyed; the massive square tower, when viewed from the south, is especially interesting. The Abbey arms, carved on a circular piece of oak six inches in diameter, were formerly to be seen on the north-east end of the stalls in the choir;<sup>1</sup> but this interesting evidence of the founding of the church has been removed from its original position, and fixed in the wall above the Communion table.

The new site at Kirkstall would, at this period, and for centuries afterwards, be a very beautiful one. It was well selected, being in a secluded vale on the banks of a murmuring river, pure from its magnificent source amidst the hills of Craven; sufficiently low to be sheltered from the inclemency of winds, yet beyond any ordinary possibility of being reached by floods. The wide-spreading forest, the growth of many centuries, approaching the house on its northern and western sides, would give an additional charm to the scene. Southward, the elevated tract of ground on which Bramley was situated, bounded the view in that direction; while eastward, the opening valley, attractive in its spring-tide bloom, extended to the Castle of Leeds, the embattled home of the Paganells, sub-infeudatories to the powerful founder of the house.

After the removal of the establishment to this eligible site, the favour and piety of De Lacy continued; he supplied the monks with corn and money,—laid the foundation of the church with his own hands, which with some of the adjoining buildings, he completed at his own expense,—and to a liberal endowment, subsequently added the means of providing the vestments of the Abbot, and also a lamp

1 Whitaker's History of Craven, p. 70.

to be kept burning day and night before the high altar. The progress of the works so auspiciously commenced was satisfactory, and after the expiration of thirty years, the venerable Alexander and his noble patron had the pleasure of beholding the completion of the *Monastery of St. Mary* at Kirkstall.

The records of the Treasury of the Dean and Chapter at York state, that at the request of Abbot Alexander and the monks, the two chapels of Bracewell and Marton, in Craven, were erected by Archbishop Murdac into mother churches, with their own parishes, as they still remain.<sup>1</sup> In 1156, Pope Adrian IV. took the monks, their Church, and all that belonged to them, under his protection ; he confirmed all their donations and compositions for tythes, gave them certain privileges and immunities, and forbade all persons in any manner to disturb them or to diminish their possessions. At this period Henry II. also confirmed to the Abbey what possessions then belonged to it. Yet, notwithstanding these things, the brethren experienced a little trouble, for a dispute arose about the possession of the valuable grange of Bernoldswic, which Hugh, Earl of Norfolk, claimed as part of his possessions, Henry De Lacy having only held of him as tenant at an annual rent. This claim appears to have lain dormant for many years, as neither De Lacy nor the monks appear to have been aware of it : but the Earl succeeded in establishing his claim in law, and the monks were evicted. The Abbot, however, earnestly interceded with the Earl, and at length prevailed with him to allow them to hold the estate

<sup>1</sup> Walbran's Memorials of Fountains, vol 1., p. 91. *Note.*



at the accustomed rent, which he afterwards, on the solicitation of the King, generously remitted, and bestowed the whole estate upon the monastery. The house continued to prosper during the administration of Alexander, some of its most valuable possessions having been acquired by him;—he finished the whole of the monastic buildings, which, with the Church, the two Dormitories, the Refectory, the Cloisters, the Chapter House, and the other necessary offices, he covered with tiles; he also planned and set in order the several granges,—preserved the woods;—and after an abbacy of thirty-five years, departed this life, both in word and deed, a good, and a very old, man. It has been supposed that the noble patron of the monastery terminated his earthly career about this time while in the Holy Land; but other and more reliable accounts state that he died at home, and was interred within the walls of the house which his piety had founded.<sup>1</sup>

RALPH HAGETH, the 2nd Abbot, occurs in 1182. He was a venerable man, first a monk, and afterwards Prior, of Fountains, and followed in early life the profession of arms, but being dissatisfied therewith, and longing for peace and solitude, he was induced to join the brethren at that house. On his being placed at the head of the establishment at Kirkstall, he entered on a troublesome period, consisting of contentions without, fears within, mortality of cattle, loss of possessions, and scarcity of provisions; but the most serious event of all was the loss of the grange of Mickelthwaite, the largest and best support of the monastery. Henry II. seized the grange as part of the forfeited estates

<sup>1</sup> Boothroyd's *History of Pontefract*, p. 68.

of Roger de Mowbray, of whom the monks held it, and gave it, with the fees of Collingham and Bardsey, to Adam de Bruce, in exchange for the castle of Danby. The monks severely blamed the Abbot for the loss of this grange, as well as for that of a golden chalice, and a copy of the gospels, which he had given to the King to conciliate his favor on the preceding occasion. Dr. Whitaker states that he was pleased with the dissatisfaction of the monks on this account, and was willing to hope they really prized the gospels as gold, and that if it was their only copy, which is far from being improbable, their loss was indeed to be deplored.<sup>1</sup> This loss of property caused the dispersion of the brethren amongst the other houses of their order, but the King dying without making any restitution, the convent re-assembled, and reduced their expenses in proportion to their revenue, but were never able to pay their creditors in full. Hageath subsequently became Abbot of Fountains, where he led a pious and contemplative life, and died in peace, being buried in the Chapter House there, where an uninscribed stone on the north side of Abbot William is thought to cover his remains.<sup>2</sup>

LAMBERT, the 3rd Abbot, occurs in 1191. He was one of the original colony who left Fountains for Bernoldswic, and was a man of great piety and simplicity, but attended more to spiritual than to temporal matters. In his time the grange of Clivacher was claimed by a knight called Richard de Elland, and the Abbot perceiving his claim to be well founded, resigned the estate into the hands of his

<sup>1</sup> History of Craven, p 63.

<sup>2</sup> Walbran's Memorials of Fountains, vol. I., *Note*, pp. 124, 133.

patron, Robert de Lacy, from whom he had received it, who bestowed the vill and park of Akarington upon the monastery instead, and the Abbot on obtaining possession, proceeded to repeat the former harsh course of ejecting the occupants, in order to reduce it to a grange. The inhabitants, by this unwise proceeding, being altogether dispossessed of their property, displayed their angry feelings by burning the grange with its contents, and the three lay brothers, Norman, Umfred, and Robert, who managed it, perished miserably in the flames. The Abbot, extremely grieved at this untoward circumstance, commended the souls of the dead to God, and committed their bodies to the grave; he then, repairing to his patron, related the matter to him with many tears; and that nobleman, being very indignant, proceeded to punish the offenders by banishing them with all their relations. This severe sentence caused the authors of the outrage to seek the Abbot, and falling at his feet, by the permission of their offended chief, they made full satisfaction to God and the monks, and swore to abjure the grange, both for themselves and their successors, and whatever right they possessed to it they conferred on the monastery; and concluded by giving a sum of money as compensation for the losses they had occasioned. Therefore, peace being made, the Abbot re-built the grange, and all things else been suitably finished, he died in a good old age, in the 9th year of his administration. Robert de Lacy also died during this abbacy, in 1193, and was buried in the monastery.<sup>1</sup>

TURGESIUS, the 4th Abbot, occurs in 1200. He was a man of holy memory, of exemplary abste-

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. V., p. 300.

miousness, and a most severe chastiser of his own body. He subdued all unlawful passions by wearing a rough garment, bearing in mind those words of the gospel, "they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses."<sup>1</sup> His outer raiment consisted only of a cowl and tunic, and in this manner he was clad in winter as well as in summer. He never wore shoes, nor used straw on which to lie, and though so scantily clothed, yet he stood at the night service when others in double garments were almost frozen stiff, for he overcame the intense cold with the fervor of the inward man. No one, however, was more pleasant than he, and none more temperate; he was constant in weeping, in compunction, and devotion. After spending nine years at Kirkstall, he resigned his office and retired to Fountains, where he died in peace.

HELYAS, the 5th Abbot, occurs in 1209. He had previously been a Pelagian monk, but appears to have renounced that heresy, and afterwards was a monk in the Abbey of Roche. He was well experienced in temporal matters, and took immediate steps to put the affairs of the house over which he presided into a moderately prosperous condition; but he experienced a little difficulty with the patron of the monastery, Roger de Lacy, who from some cause conceived such a dislike to him that he would not even deign to see him, or admit him to his presence. This harshness on the part of this nobleman appears, however, to have been at length subdued, for he afterwards esteemed the Abbot as an intimate friend, and the affairs of the house were in consequence considerably promoted. Helyas, therefore, relying

<sup>1</sup> Matthew, c. xi., v. 8.



on the assistance of De Lacy, petitioned King John for a restitution of the grange of Micklethwaite, which King Henry, his father, had formerly taken from the monks; but though the Abbot's request was supported by the great men of the Court, the utmost that could be obtained from the King was, that the monastery should hold the grange, together with the manors of Collingham and Bardsey, as a fee at the king's hands, paying to him yearly the sum of £90. About this time the soc of Adel and the vill of Allerton, with other estates were added to the possessions of the monastery; but on the other hand it was dispossessed by the arbitrary conduct of the King of the grange of Hutton and land at Thorpe. The interdict of the Kingdom by the Pope occurred in the early part of this abbacy; but the state of the establishment at this time is not even alluded to in the Chronicle of the house. In that of Meaux it is stated that the services of the church were celebrated with closed doors, that the dead were not interred in the cemetery, cloister, or other usual places, but were buried in the orchard, and in a waste place outside the precincts of the monastery.<sup>1</sup> No doubt similar proceedings would take place at Kirkstall; and if in future years the remains of interments should be found in any of the fields adjoining the Abbey enclosure, they may with great probability be referred to this period.

RALPH DE NEWCASTLE, the 6th Abbot, was the companion of the pious Ralph Hagest, the successor of Alexander, subsequently Abbot of Fountains, and was with him at Clairvaux, on his return from a Chapter General of the Order, when from severe

<sup>1</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, vol. I., *pref.*, p. xl., and pp. 342, 343.

sickness his life was despaired of, as related in the Chronicle of the former house.<sup>1</sup> He died in the reign of Henry III., on the 9th of the ides of April.

WALTER, the 7th Abbot, died in the same reign, on the 2nd of the ides of October.

MAURICE, the 8th Abbot, succeeded in 1222. In 1224 his seal, with that of the Abbot of Byland, was appended to a Deed of Composition between the Monks of Fountains and Jerveaux, relating to their lands at Horton in Ribblesdale.<sup>2</sup> In the same year it was commanded by the King that the Bailiffs of York should suffer one vessel of the Abbot of Fountains, and another of the Abbot of Kirkstall, freighted with wool, to depart wherever they pleased.<sup>3</sup> The Cistercian Orders were great dealers in wool, and these vessels most likely were bound to the port of Hull, where the cargoes would be re-shipped for Flanders, which country was at this period the seat of the woollen manufacture. About this time a monk of the house being at Rome brought Papal Letters to the Abbot and Convent of Meaux, on the appropriation of the Church of Skryne by that monastery.<sup>4</sup> In 1225 this Abbot was appointed, by a Rescript of Pope Honorius III., with the Abbots of Fountains, Byland, and Jerveaux, to enquire into several matters in dispute between the Hospital of St. Peter, at York, and the Abbey of Meaux.<sup>5</sup> He died on the 7th of the kalends of April, 1249.

ADAM, the 9th Abbot, succeeded on Friday seven-night after Easter, in the last-named year.

<sup>1</sup> Walbran's Memorials of Fountains, vol. I., *pref. p.* lxi., and 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. I., p. 137, *Note*;   <sup>3</sup> Vol. I., p. 138, *Note*.

<sup>4</sup> Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, vol. II., p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> Walbran's Memorials of Fountains, vol. I., p. 176. Wilson's MSS. Meaux Abbey, p. 64. Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, vol. I., p. 431.

HUGH DE MIKELAY, the 10th Abbot, was created on the 17th of the kalends of April, 1259. In 1261 Henry III. extended his protection to the Abbot and Convent, and all their possessions. This Abbot died on the kalends of June, 1262.

SIMON, the 11th Abbot, was created on the 15th of the kalends of June, 1262. He was summoned to the Parliament held at London in 1265 (49 Henry III.),<sup>1</sup> which is the earliest to which our modern notions of such an assembly can attach themselves, as the writs of summons, in addition to ecclesiastical and temporal peers, first included knights of the shire and citizens or burgesses.<sup>2</sup> This Abbot died on the 13th of the kalends of March, 1269.

WILLIAM DE LEDES, the 12th Abbot, succeeded in the 2nd of the nones of March, on a Thursday in the last-named year, and exercised his office to the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, 1275. In a charter of the Abbey relating to lands in Chapel-Allerton, which may be assigned to the latter end of the reign of Henry III., the chapel at this place is mentioned, which, as the monastery possessed large estates there, was probably founded by the Abbot and monks, either solely or jointly with the Lord of the manor and the inhabitants.<sup>3</sup>

GILBERT DE CORTLES, the 13th Abbot, was created on the morrow of the octave of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, in the last-named year. He exercised his office three years one month and four days, when he resigned. He was created a second time on the 3rd of the ides of December, and exercised his office to the Feast of St. Peter-ad-Vincula,

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. VI., Part III., *Appendix*, p. 1635.

<sup>2</sup> Proceedings of the Archæological Institute, *Yorkshire*, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Whitaker's *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 128.

1280. During this abbacy, in 1276, the protection of Edward I. was obtained by the monks, for the term of five years, to enable them to pay their debts.

HENRY KARR, the 14th Abbot, was created on the vigil of St. Andrew the Apostle, 1280. In 9 Edward I., (1281) this Abbot was Lord of the manor of Bramley; and there is every reason to believe that the Church in this place was founded about this time by the Abbot and monks for the use of the villeins and others. It was dedicated to St. Margaret, but not a vestige of the original fabric is remaining.<sup>1</sup>

HUGH DE GRIMSTONE, the 15th Abbot, was created on the day of St. Lambert the Bishop, 1284. The following was the state of the House at this time, as taken and certified by the brethren, and Henry, Abbot of Fountains, under their seals, and recorded in the Chronicle:—Yoke oxen, 16; cows, 84; heifers and bullocks, 16; asses, 21; sheep, *none*. The debts, by the revision made before the Barons of the Exchequer, were £4,402 12s. 7d.; in addition, Jacob de Pistolis and others held bonds to the amount of 500 marks, and the Abbot of Fountains, one of 50 marks; there were also 59 sacks of wool, and 9 marks due to Bernard Taldi for washing them; and also moneys due to John Taylden, to the amount of 340 marks. The total amount of debts appears to have been £5,248 15s. 7d., besides 59 sacks of wool. The establishment had now for some time been gradually sinking under an accumulating amount of debt, and at this period their creditors pressed matters to a crisis with their demands for payment. The monks were under the necessity of applying through their patron, Henry de Lacy, to King

<sup>1</sup> Whitaker's Loidis and Elmete, p. 115.



Edward I., to procure, by the royal interposition, an extension of time for satisfying the claims made upon them; and having determined upon this course of proceeding, the Abbot was under the necessity of going beyond the sea to find the King, who was then at St. Sever, in Gascony. The letter of the Abbot, who appears to have been a thorough man of business, detailing the perils of the journey, and the many difficulties encountered in bringing the business to a successful termination, is recorded in the Chronicle of the House from whence it has been extracted by Dr. Whitaker,<sup>1</sup> whose translation I have adopted with a few slight emendations. In the original some legal documents are set forth, which it is not necessary to repeat here.

"BROTHER HUGH, called ABBOT of KIRKSTALL, to his beloved in Christ, the Convent of the same House, health and blessing in the bond of peace :

"OUR distresses at the last General Chapter with respect to Simon *versus* Walter being ended, we set out for Gascony on an uncertain errand, and with a bitter and heavy heart, as our beloved brother and son John de Bridesall will inform you. But after many hindrances, and with great difficulty, both from the unexpected length of the journey and the extreme poverty of Burgundy, which we traversed through thickets, rather than through highways, we met with the King in the remotest part of Gascony. On the way we were afflicted with a quartan fever, which reduced us so low that we despaired of life; but blessed be the heavenly physician! nothing more than a trifling remnant of the complaint now hangs about us. Here we found our patron, the Earl of Lincoln, with other great men of the Court, attending upon the King; and to him we explained fully and to the best of our ability the distresses of the house. He was touched with pity at the representation, and promised us all the information and assistance in his power.

<sup>1</sup> History of Craven, p. 65—68.

"And that the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer aforesaid may faithfully execute these writs, we have letters of recommendation addressed to them from all the earls, bishops, barons, and other counsellors of the King, attending on him at this place. But because the King was not inclined to interfere with the debt due to the Cardinal, or to Tokes, the London Jew, or with the wool, although we had many intercessors with him; yet by the grace of God, obtained through the mediation of your prayers, and by the mediocrity of our understanding, reflecting that if either of these debts remained undischarged, it would be productive of great inconvenience to the house, we hit at length upon a remedy which is likely to be effectual.

"For having shewn to the Earl and his counsel the extent of our lands in Blackburnshire (Excewisle excepted), and of our lands in Roundhay, and rents in Shadwell and Seacroft, it appeared that the above-mentioned lands and rents, with the addition of £4, which for several years last past we have received out of the exchequer of Pontefract, deducting everything which in reason ought to be deducted, would amount to £41 7s. 9d. yearly. Now this revenue might be sold for £413 7s. 6d. What need of more words? Let there be no buying or selling of these premises, but a dexterous exchange, so that instead of this £41 7s. 9d., deducting uncertain and untried improvements, the possibility of which we are not convinced of, we shall receive yearly out of the exchequer at Pontefract twenty-four marks for ever, with this excellent condition annexed, that the said Earl, in order to discharge the debt due to the Cardinal and the Jew, engages for the payment of 350 marks, under the penalty of repairing whatever damage may accrue to us by any irregularity in the payment. But what it was that touched the said Earl with compassion, by what reasons he was overcome, and how induced to give up a great deal for a little, it would not be prudent to trust to paper. And, that we might not be deceived in any of the premises, we have been careful to enrol in Chancery the obligations we have received for payment of the above sums, and the contract in like manner. Both these, moreover, are ratified by the King's confirmation, which is in our hands.

"And now, brethren, from what has gone before, ye may in some measure understand what trouble we have undergone. If therefore we have done well, think of a recompense; if otherwise, or that we have been lukewarm in your concern, spare our infirmity.

"But we require you that ye labour day and night to the utmost of your ability, that everything belonging to you, excepting the crops upon the ground, which cannot be removed without being destroyed, may be entirely taken away before the Earl's messenger, whom we purposely detain here with his horse and groom, shall arrive to take livery and seisin of the lands. And whatever is incapable of being removed, abandon peaceably, because the said Earl by his letters, directed to Sir Richard de Salvaine, which he will receive by the bearer of these, hath required him to purchase at a fair price whatever you are inclined to sell within his bailiwick, and to afford you every other accommodation consistent with the livery of the lands. It will not be prudent to shew these letters to any one; but, until you have all safe, keep your own counsel secret from every one out of the bosom of the chapter. And because we desire to be informed of what has happened since our departure, before we make any new contract, which might possibly interfere with your present circumstances, we require you on sight and hearing hereof to inform us of your situation by the swiftest messenger you have. Send some money too by the same hand, however you come by it, even though it be taken from the sacred oblations, that we may at least be able to purchase necessities while we are labouring in your vineyard. In this we earnestly entreat you not to fail, for in truth we were never so destitute before. Farewell my beloved! Peace be with you. Amen.

"FROM Castle Reginald, on the Morrow of St. Martin, in the year of our Lord 1287."

The following was the state of the House in 1301, as taken and certified by Richard, Abbot of Fountains, in like manner as the preceding one:—Oxen, 215; cows, 160; bullocks and yearlings, 152; calves, 90; sheep and lambs, 4,000. The debts amounted to only £160, which shews the care and business-like habits which were exercised by the Abbot. Everything therefore having been with great wisdom and perseverance satisfactorily arranged, and the affairs of the establishment brought into a much more prosperous state, as related in the preceding

letter and statement, the Abbot died on the kalends of May, 1304.

JOHN DE BRIDESALL, the 16th Abbot, succeeded in 1304. He appears to have been a pious man, yet the house seems to have been again in difficulties, as may be gathered from a letter of his, also recorded in the Chronicle, and written by him from Canterbury to the convent, on his way to embark for the continent to seek an interview with the King. I have adopted Dr. Whitaker's translation of this letter,<sup>1</sup> with some additions.

"To his Reverend Brethren, the Prior and Convent of the Monastery of KIRKSTALL, JOHN, styled ABBOT of the same, wishes health and grace, and that they may labour more earnestly after the things which concern religious peace and charity.

"BELOVED, we have written this letter in haste from Canterbury, knowing that an account of the success of our journey will be pleasing to you. In the first place, our dear brother who was present, will inform you that on the morrow of St. Laurence we were met by letters from the King, in a very threatening style: that we were apprised of robbers who laid wait for us in the woods, under a rock; and that we were bound under the penalty of forfeiting all our goods, to abide the King's pleasure. However, having been at length dismissed from his presence with honour, we proceeded on our way, and notwithstanding the delay in London, arrived at Canterbury on Monday evening, ourselves, our servants, and horses, being all well. We are not without hope, therefore, that our feeble beginnings will be followed by better fortune. On Wednesday morning, the wind blowing fair, we put the horses on board a ship. For the time to come we commend you, dear brethren, to God, and our bodily safety to your prayers! But especially pray for the salvation of our souls, for we are not greatly solicitous if this earthly part of us be delivered into the hands of the wicked one, so that the spirit be saved in the day of the Lord,

<sup>1</sup> History of Craven, p. 65—68.



which we hope for through the assistance of your intercessions, yet we should wish, if it be the will of God, to be committed to the earth by your hands, wherever you shall dispose. But know assuredly, that if we return, whoever shall have been most humble in conversation, and active in business during our absence shall receive an ample measure of grace and recompense from God, and shall every hour be more affectionately regarded by us.

"We entreat and enjoin brother Richard Ekeleslaye to prepare himself for the duty of preaching on the nativity of our Lord, unless we return in the meantime, that so great a festival may not pass without a sermon, a thing which hath never yet happened, nor, by the grace of God, ever shall do. We wrote unto certain persons, 'Abstain from every appearance of evil, and avoid it beforehand, whatever is or can be pretended in its behalf.' God shall give you the knowledge of these things. We adjure you, brethren, by the bowels of mercy in Jesus Christ, that if ye hear of our departure, ye will pray for us faithfully, remembering the labours and distresses which we endured in the beginning of our creation, and of which ye are reaping the fruits in peace. Ye know, dearly beloved, that worldly occupations such as we have been long entangled in for your sakes, are not without danger to the soul. But we derive great hopes from your compassion, seeing that we aim at no earthly advantage, nor consume the revenues of the monastery without cause. Salute our dear friends, William de Finchden, John de Podesay, Richard de Goldsbrough. Adam de Hopton, and William de Leventhorpe, and especially our dearest companion, William de Franke, to whom we would have some one interpret this letter. When he hears it he will scarcely be able to refrain from tears, which he shed abundantly at our parting. We commend our poor mother to your compassion. Salute one another with an holy kiss. The salutation of me, John, your minister, such as I am, who am studying to do everything in my power for your advantage and honour. We commend you again and again to God and the Blessed Virgin.

"WRITTEN at Canterbury, on the 3rd of the octaves of St. Mary, with abundance of tears."

The feeling of piety pervading this letter is very pleasing, and forms a striking contrast to the

preceding one. This Abbot was summoned to the Parliament held at Carlisle, by writ dated 21st January, 1307<sup>1</sup> (35 Edward I.). He appears to have died in office.

WALTER, the 17th Abbot, was elected in 1313, and in 1319 (13 Edward II.) he was commanded by writ to attend a Council at York, on Monday next after the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene in that year,<sup>2</sup> to consult on the best means to be adopted to enable the King to carry on the war with Scotland.

WILLIAM, the 18th Abbot, occurs in 1334, in which year he was commissioned by William de Melton, Archbishop of York, either alone, or with the Abbot of Fountains, to absolve the body of Simon Warde, Knight, deceased, of certain sins committed by him in his lifetime, but which commission appears, however, to have been carried into effect by the Abbot of Fountains alone. Sir Simon was a great man of his time, both in the council and in the field; but what he had done to incur that extreme censure of the Church, which required one of its highest dignitaries to perform so solemn and awful a ceremony as this, is not recorded. It was a form that in those days was absolutely necessary to enable him to have Christian burial; but whether he obtained it in the Priory of Esholt, which his ancestors had founded, or elsewhere, is unknown.<sup>3</sup> In the last-named year an Inquisition was taken at York, before William de Denum, John Gifford, Adam de Hopetoun, and

<sup>1</sup> Wilson's MSS. *Kirkstall Abbey*.

<sup>2</sup> Palgrave's *Parliamentary Writs*, vol. II., p. 1059.

<sup>3</sup> Walbran's *Memorials of Fountains*, vol. I., p. 196—198.

Thomas Deyvill, Commissioners, in the presence of Peter de Saltmarsh, Sheriff, and a jury elected for that purpose, in respect of the manor of Bernoldswic and its appurtenances, from a portion of which, amounting to 800 acres, the Abbot and Convent had been ejected by Henry de Lacy, late Earl of Lincoln. The jurors, after due enquiry, found that the monks had been illegally ejected from this portion of their estate; that restitution should be made to them; and that none had a right therein but the said Abbot and Convent. In this abbacy Richard, son of Roger Tempest, of Bracewell in Craven, released and quit claimed all his right in the advowson of the church of that place, and all the lands and other things belonging to the said church, to the Abbot and Convent of Kirkstall. In 1347 this church was appropriated to the said Abbot and Convent by William de la Zouch, Archbishop of York, who ordained a vicarage therein.

ROGER DE LEDES, the 19th Abbot, was confirmed on the 15th December, 1349. A bequest of books to him occurs in the testament of Thomas de Halton, Rector of the Church of Adel, in 1375—namely, the Sixth Book of the Decretals, the Constitutions of Clement, one book called “Pars Oculi,” and another called “Casus Bernardi.” The testator appointed the Abbot one of the executors of his will.<sup>1</sup> It may be remarked that copies of the two first-named of these books were amongst those which were publicly burnt by Luther, at the eastern gate of Wittenberg, in the presence of a great number of doctors and students, at the commencement of the Reformation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Testamenta Eboracensia, vol. I., p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> Daubigne's History of the Reformation, vol. II., p. 150.

JOHN DE THORNBURG, the 20th Abbot, occurs in 1367; in which year he, along with the Abbot of Fountains, took a prominent part in the dispute amongst the monks of Meaux as to the election of an Abbot. He proposed to solve the difficulty by offering himself for election, but the Convent thought it best to elect one of their own number.<sup>1</sup> In 1390 this Abbot, amongst others, was a witness to the affixing of the common seal of the Abbey of Meaux to a document relating to the reception at that house, of Thomas, Duke of Gloucester and Lord of Holderness, as patron, founder, and advocate of the monastery.<sup>2</sup>

JOHN DE BARDESEY, the 21st Abbot, occurs in 1392. In 1395 the Abbot and monks purchased the Alien Priory of Burstall, in Holderness, with a considerable portion of its possessions, including the churches of Aldborough, Burstall, Burstwick, Owthorne, Paul, Skeffling, and Withernsea, and the chapels of Colden, Frodinham, Holm, Marflete, Newham, Thorngumbald, and Wareham, the monks receiving the revenues, and providing priests to attend to the spiritual requirements of the people. This house was a Benedictine foundation, but owing to the frequent seizing of the estates of foreign monasteries during the wars with France, the order to which it belonged deemed it best to dispose of it. The monks of Kirkstall, on obtaining possession, attached it to their own monastery as a cell, and so it continued until the dissolution.<sup>3</sup> As it was situate on this perpetually changing coast, the

<sup>1</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, vol. III., p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> *Wilson's MSS.*, Meaux Abbey, p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> *Poulson's History of Holderness*, vol. II., p. 504.



encroachments of the sea have swept away every vestige of the building. In 1396 this Abbot and the Abbot of Fountains were appointed visitors of the Abbey of Meaux, and to receive the resignation of William de Scardeburg, the venerable Abbot of that monastery, which resignation appears to have been received by this Abbot solely, who was in consequence involved in the litigious proceedings relating to the election of his successor.<sup>1</sup> In the latter part of this century this Abbot, along with those of Rievaulx, Fountains, and Byland, appointed the Abbot of Meaux their Procurator, to attend a General Chapter of the Cistercian Order, held at Vienna, by order of Pope Boniface IX.<sup>2</sup> In 1401 a Rescript was addressed to this Abbot by the Abbot of Fountains, whereby license was given by the latter dignitary, in the exercise of his plenary jurisdiction over this house, and to ensure the salvation of souls, which he states will undoubtedly be obtained by women as men, to allow the former to visit the Church at Kirkstall solely on certain days in the year, but prohibiting their admission to any other part of the building. In a previous history of the Abbey, published some years ago,<sup>3</sup> the account of this transaction is assigned to the time of Abbot William Grayson, but I think it appertains to this abbacy. In 1410 the seal of this Abbot, along with those of others, was affixed to a letter in testimony of the election of Roger Frank to the abbacy of Fountains.<sup>4</sup> On the 15th October, 1444, a Commission from the Archbishop of York was issued to this Abbot to veil Joan, widow of William Lacy, Esq.,

<sup>1</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, vol. III., p. 233.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 266.

<sup>3</sup> *Historical Account of Kirkstall Abbey*, 1827, p. 110.

<sup>4</sup> *Walbran's Memorials of Fountains*, vol. I., p. 207.



of Halifax,<sup>1</sup> which event would perhaps take place at the neighbouring nunnery of Esholt. On the 15th February, 14..., Robert Calverley, of Calverley, in his will, wished the Abbot of Kirkstall to say mass and dirge for his soul, in such manner as he would be agreed with.<sup>2</sup> In 1456 the church of Middleton, in Pickering-Lythe was appropriated to the Abbey of Kirkstall by William Boothe, Archbishop of York, who ordained a vicarage in the said church. During this abbacy a large bell was provided for the monastery; it is now in the ancient tower of the church at Kirkthorpe, in a secluded valley near Wakefield, and bears the following inscription:—  
**\*LAURENTIUS: JONES: DE: BERDESAY:**  
**ANAS: Ao: Di: Mo.** The year in which it was cast has not been placed upon it for want of space. It appears to have been called “Laurentius,” either in honor of the donor, or of the saint of that name,—and at the time of its founding it would be consecrated with all the impressive rites which the church used on these occasions. It may be concluded that, on many a dark and stormy night, on the passing away of a brother its loud and solemn sound would be heard by the Airedale peasant, who, doubtless—raising his head to listen—would breathe an earnest prayer for the welfare of the departing soul. There is a tradition that the bell at the old Chapel at Morley was brought from Kirkstall,<sup>3</sup> but considering that the date thereon is post mediæval, this could not have been so. This abbacy appears to have been a very long one, if the dates are correct, but it is probable that the list of Abbots is defective, and that one or more names are lost.

<sup>1</sup> Testamenta Eboracensia vol. III., p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. IV., p. 158.

<sup>3</sup> Smith's Rambles about Morley, p. 135.

WILLIAM GRAYSON, the 22nd Abbot, occurs in 1460, in an original charter in my possession. He was present at the enthronisation of George Nevile, Archbishop of York, in 1466, and at that extravagant banquet, given on the occasion at Cawood Castle, he sat with the other great northern heads of religious houses at the second table, the temporal Barons present being placed at an inferior one. It is stated that this Abbot was deposed.

THOMAS WYMBERSLEY, the 23rd Abbot, was confirmed on the 6th April, 1468. On the 13th March, 1498, Robert Hirste, of Leeds, by his will, gave him an old noble, weighing a ryall, to pray for his soul.<sup>1</sup>

ROBERT KELYNBEC, the 24th Abbot, was elected on the 21st August, 1499. It is asserted that this Abbot built, or gave the stone for building, St. Mary's, otherwise "Our Lady's Service," at the east end of the north aisle of the late Parish Church of Leeds. It is now demolished, but the work was evidently of this period, and the stone was grit of Black Moor, which belonged to the Abbot and Convent of Kirkstall.<sup>2</sup>

WILLIAM STOCKDALE, the 25th Abbot, was elected on the 10th December, 1501. On the 25th February, 1506, John Stockdale, Alderman and Merchant of York, appointed his brother, the Abbot of Kirkstall, supervisor of his will, and gave him for his labour two precious stones, which he had belonging to him.<sup>3</sup> It appears that the sanctity of the place did not always preserve the property of the monks from depredations, for it is recorded that in 1507 one William Midgley, of Horsforth, "drove away," or

<sup>1</sup> Testamenta Eboracensia, vol. IV., p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Whitaker's Loidis and Elmete, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup> Testamenta Eboracensia, vol. IV., p. 257.

in other words, stole, twelve oxen and a cow belonging to the Abbot and Convent, and sold them in the bishopric of Durham; for which theft, and other causes, one of which was his being present at a murder committed some years previously, he took sanctuary at Durham.<sup>1</sup> At the burial of the Archbishop of York (Thomas Savage), on the 14th September, 1507, there was paid the sum of £1 2s. 8d. for sixty-eight masses said at Kirkstall for the soul of the deceased dignitary.<sup>2</sup>

WILLIAM MARSHALL, the 26th Abbot, was elected on the 5th of December, 1509, and during his abbacy the injudicious step appears to have been taken of raising the tower to its present height, as appears by the initials of his name being carved on the buttresses. On the 23rd April, 1527, an Indenture was made between this Abbot and the convent, and John Rodeley, of Bradford Dale, whereby the former parties bargained and sold to the latter party the custody and marriage of Elizabeth Watson, one of the daughters and heirs of Richard Watson, with power to him to marry her at any time during her minority, to his son and heir apparent, or to any other of his sons who at any time during such minority should be his heir apparent. For which bargain and sale the said John Rodeley covenanted to pay to the said Abbot and Convent the sum of twenty marks on the day of sealing and delivering the Indenture. Provision was made for the issue of the marriage, if it took place with any of the before-mentioned parties,—and also in case the said Elizabeth disagreed and refused the said marriage, or died before

<sup>1</sup> Sanctuarium Dunelmense, p. 42, 47, 220, and 221.

<sup>2</sup> Testamenta Eboracensia, vol. IV., p. 319.

attaining her lawful age; in either of those cases the Abbot and Convent agreed to repay the said sum of money to the said John Rodeley, his executors or assigns, within one month next after the death of the said Elizabeth, or such disagreement or refusal by her as aforesaid. It was also provided, that if all the sons of the said John Rodeley should die before a marriage could take place, then the said Elizabeth should revert and come again to the keeping and custody of the said Abbot and Convent, they repaying the purchase money to the said John Rodeley. The document, of which the preceding is an abstract, is in the possession of Edward Hailstone, Esq., F.S.A., and has evidently been prepared with great care. The parties are respectable,—due provision appears to have been made for any objection which the young lady might thereafter have to its terms being carried into effect, and for the return of the money agreed to be paid to the Abbot and Convent for the purchase of their rights in the matter.

JOHN RIPLEY, the 27th Abbot, was elected on the 21st July, 1528. He appears, from a copy of an Award, dated in 1532,<sup>1</sup> to have had a long dispute with Sir William Calverley, of Calverley, Knight, as to certain lands in Bramley and Burley, near Otley, and which was then concluded on terms chiefly in his favour. The Arbitrators, however, for the prevention of further disputes, ordered that a double ditch should be made from the east end of a valley in Bramley Moor, lying between Coal Hill and Bradley Hill westward, to the brook running near the east end of Farsley Lane, at the equal costs and charges of both parties. The “good old times” at

<sup>1</sup> Wilson's MSS. Kirkstall Abbey.



Kirkstall were, however, drawing to a close, dark clouds overspread the political horizon,—

Behind, a darker hour ascends !  
 The altars quake, the crozier bends,  
 The ire of a despotic King  
 Rides forth upon destruction's wing ;

and this Abbot, the last of a long line, surrendered the monastery to the Crown on the 22nd November, 1540, and soon the impress of desolation was fixed upon it ; its stately church, once vocal with the song of praise, was laid open to the winds of heaven, and the lamp before the high altar, which the noble founder fondly thought would perpetuate his memory for ages, was for ever extinguished. The Abbot and the monks were pensioned—the former receiving £66 13s. 4d. per annum, an amount less than that given to the heads of many of the other great houses in the country. Tradition states that the Abbot, with feelings similar to those of the Prior of Bolton, could not tear himself away from the scenes he loved so well, and amidst which he had held so distinguished a position, but took up his abode in the principal Gate-House, in which lonely retreat, after meditating over his blighted hopes, and the desecration of his once noble house, he died and was buried. His last moments may, I think, to some extent, be realised, and the event would form a fitting subject for a poet or painter to delineate. It may have occurred at midnight's lonely hour, when the wild winds from the far Atlantic swept in loud gusts over the woods of Airedale,—while, on an oaken pallet in a corner of the stone-ribbed apartment, would be seen, by the flickering light of a solitary lamp, the pale and sinking frame of the dying man. The few surviving monks of his



house, who still lingered in the precincts, would gather in deep grief around their deposed, but still to them their lawful and venerated head ;—the last rites of his religion, to which he had clung through weal and woe, would be administered,—and while the crucifix, the emblem of his faith, was held before his fading eye, his wearied spirit would pass away, it is hoped, to a place where the tyranny of kings and the exercise of lawless power have no existence. Then would succeed the placing of the pallid remains in the coffin procured from the Abbey,—with, probably, the hasty burial in the night to avoid publicity,—and beneath the vaulted roof of the Norman gateway, —without vestment,—without pomp,—without passing bell,—with few only to lament his departure,—was laid the last of his line, while the deeply impressive, but lowly-murmured hymn for the dead, would close the solemn scene.

I am glad of the opportunity afforded me here, to correct some inaccuracies which occur in several historical works in relation to this Monastery. It is stated in Willis's History of Abbeys,<sup>1</sup> that the name of the last Abbot of the House was "John Browne ;" but on what authority I cannot tell, as by a reference to the Deed of Surrender, the Abbot is expressly stated to be "John Ripeley." In a note to the Catalogue of the Library of the Abbey of Meaux, contained in the Appendix to the Chronicle of that House,<sup>2</sup> it is stated that "Serlo" was "an English writer in grammar, Abbot of Fountains, and afterwards of Kirkstall." If the writer means the venerable Serlo who dictated the Chronicle, he never was

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II., p. 275

<sup>2</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa, Appendix, Note, vol. III., p. xciii.*

Abbot, but only a monk of Fountains, and afterwards of Kirkstall. It is also stated in Poulson's History of Holderness,<sup>1</sup> that Philip, elected the second Abbot of Meaux in 1160, was previously "Prior of Kirkstall;" and this statement is repeated in Walbran's Memorials of Fountains,<sup>2</sup> but which is evidently an error of transcription, as by reference to the Chronicle of the former House, it is seen that he held that office in the Monastery of Kirkstead, in Lincolnshire.<sup>3</sup> It is also stated in the Volume of Sermons, published at the re-opening of the Parish Church of Leeds, and in Taylor's Biographical Sketches of the Worthies of Leeds, that "Elizabeth Stainton was prioress of Kirkstall,"<sup>4</sup> which is evidently an error, as it is well known that no such person could be in that establishment, it being one for monks only, and the lady in question was the first elected to that office in the Priory of Kirkless, near Dewsbury.<sup>5</sup>

The records of this Monastery, in common with those of others, shew that, amongst other property given to it, grants of bondmen, or as they are designated, "nativi," with their goods, chattels, and offspring, were frequently made. The state of the bondmen of the monastic orders was, I should say, much more to be desired than those of the laity, their services were not exacted with the same amount of harshness and severity, and religious instruction, such as it was, was not withheld from them, as evidenced by chapels in some places being erected for their use; and they sometimes appear to have been able to cause no small amount of trouble and annoyance to

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II., p. 294.      <sup>2</sup> Vol. I., p. 297, *Note*.

<sup>3</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, vol. I., p. 159.

<sup>4</sup> Page 70.

<sup>5</sup> Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. V., p. 738.

their feudal possessors.<sup>1</sup> It is well known, says Dr. Whitaker, that this unhappy condition, though the subjects of it were treated with great gentleness, was suffered to continue amongst the tenants of religious houses after it was abolished everywhere else. It appears from the simple and touching language of a petition from the inhabitants of a village in Craven, which had formed part of the possessions of the Abbey of Salley to the Earl of Cumberland, to whom it had been granted, that some remains of personal slavery existed even in the reign of Elizabeth.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to what was bestowed by the munificent founder, numerous estates, bequests, and privileges were from time to time conferred upon this establishment, thereby raising it to the rank of one of the most opulent and important in the kingdom, some of the Abbots being occasionally summoned to Parliament.<sup>3</sup> It has been seen that these dignitaries, during a period of nearly four hundred years, succeeded each other with various vicissitudes of fortune, the house over which they presided being at times wealthy and prosperous, and at others overburdened with debt, as appears from the letters of Abbots Hugh de Grimstone and John de Bridesall, before referred to. I have not thought it necessary to extend this account of the monastery by inserting notices of the agreements as to tythes between it and other Houses, or the grants of estates and other possessions made to it at various times, as they may be found at length in other works.<sup>4</sup> I cannot learn

<sup>1</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, vol. III., *pref*, p. 19. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Craven*, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> *Burton's Monasticon Eboracense*, p. 297. *Selden's Titles of Honor* (1651), p. 274.

<sup>4</sup> *Burton's Monasticon Eboracense*, p. 288. *Dugdale's Monasticon*, vol. V., p. 545.

that any event of national importance has occurred in connection with this monastery,—its chronicle is silent as to such,—it does not even record a royal visit,—and the desolating tide of war appears to have never approached its walls. When civil strife was raging throughout the land,—the blanched rose and its blushing rival alternately triumphing,—when the shout of the northern foe was heard on the hills of Craven, and the trembling Canons of Bolton fled for their lives,—when the venerable church of St. Wilfrid, with many others, were plundered or given to the flames,—or when the banners of a misguided populace were raised in rebellion,—the monks of Kirkstall appear to have rested in peace, their home unscathed by fire, their service undisturbed, and the sanctuary of their pride unpolluted by the foot of the stranger.

On the surrender of the monastery to the Crown, its yearly income was estimated at £512 13s. 4d.;<sup>1</sup> and assuming the amount to be correct, the annual revenue may be calculated to have been equal to nearly £10,000 of our present currency, exclusive of the value of the granges retained by the monks in their own occupation. The members of the establishment were pensioned, and on the 1st May, 1553, the following monks remained on the list:—Leonard Windress, Anthony Jackson, Richard Batson, Edward Heptonstall, John Howard, William Lupton, Edward Sandal, Paul Mason, Thomas Pepper, John Shaw, Thomas Monk, and Henry Claughton. At this period, the site of the monastery, with some of the adjoining property, were granted by the King to Archbishop Cranmer and his

<sup>1</sup> Burton's *Monasticon Eboracense*, p. 296.



heirs, in exchange for other lands, and were settled on Peter Hammond, Esq., in trust for that prelate's younger son. The estate appears to have again reverted to the Crown during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, as it was granted by her to Edmund Downyng and Peter Asheton, gentlemen, and their heirs for ever. It is not known in what manner it left these families; but it was, with the adjoining manor of Bramley, purchased by the Saville's of Howley Hall, and since passed by marriage to the Duke of Montagu, and subsequently to the Earls of Cardigan.<sup>1</sup>

To the late G. S. Beecroft, Esq., the antiquarian world is deeply indebted, as he, in the exercise of a judicious taste, was the means of causing the long-neglected ruins to be cleared, to a great extent, from the accumulated rubbish of centuries, and also of preventing, as far as practicable, their further dilapidation; and as one whom he honoured with his friendship, I have much pleasure in bearing this testimony to his memory. He will long be remembered for his amiable disposition, and the genuine kindness of his heart. It is a matter of congratulation that the remarks made by me in a previous publication on this subject do not now apply,<sup>2</sup> but it still remains to be regretted, that many persons visiting the place should hasten its demolition by acts of wanton mischief, and by so doing, destroy what they cannot appreciate. There is, however, a great deal remaining to be done in respect of excavating and removing the rubbish from several parts of the building, and carefully repairing those portions requiring it, as by the

<sup>1</sup> See Preface.    <sup>2</sup> Antiquities of Leeds, p. 27.



percolation of water through the roofs of the choir and aisles of the church, the chapter house, and the rooms adjoining, it is only a question of time, a few years at most, before these interesting portions of the monastery will share the fate of the west dormitory, and become a mass of crumbling ruins. The present lessee, J. O. Butler, Esq., is, however, using every endeavour to preserve the place in its present condition.<sup>1</sup>

Of the several monastic foundations in this country which derive their origin from FOUNTAINS, still standing in almost all its pristine beauty, KIRKSTALL alone retains its original features, rearing its venerable walls, replete with associations of the past, on the verge of a densely peopled district; while the wasted ruins of SALLEY have only recently been retrieved from the dust,—the deserted site of MEAUX, covered by the green sward, serves as a grazing place for cattle,—and ROCHE survives but in the fragments of its once beautiful church.

I would here remark, that, although the visitors appointed by the Crown to report on the state of the monasteries found great irregularities existing, to use no harsher term, in many of them; yet this state of things did not always exist; on their founding and for many years afterwards, numbers of pious persons, wearied of the world's rude warfare, sought a refuge within their peaceful walls; and amongst others in this county who deserve to be thus remembered, are those humble and self-denying men, who left the luxurious halls of St. Mary at York, to find a home, and to found a house, amidst the privations of a desert life in the valley of the Skell, and

<sup>1</sup> For particulars connected with the acquisition of the Abbey by the Town of Leeds, see Preface.

what is recorded of them may be related of many others.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that many a monk looking beyond the observances of the church and the rules of his order, found comfort and peace of mind not in the crucifix placed before him, but in the merits and death of Christ received by faith in his heart, and as a necessary consequence "many a tonsured head now rests in Abraham's bosom." I am glad that the truth of this remark is sustained by several writers of eminence and piety, to whose statements on the subject I am only too happy to refer the reader.<sup>2</sup> In subsequent ages, however, the religious orders becoming wealthy, departed from their primitive piety; the truths proclaimed by prophets and apostles were superseded by the grossest superstition; the Bible was a sealed book, its perusal prohibited under severe penalties, and worship due to the Lord alone was paid to the blessed virgin and a host of saints. The glorious Reformation at length broke through the darkness of the Middle Ages, the pure faith of the gospel was again preached, and primitive Christianity became re-established, the minds of men were opened to comprehend the truth, and the period arrived when these establishments ceased to be of public utility, as it was found to be no longer necessary or agreeable to be immured within the walls of a cloister. The unsettled state of previous ages had gradually approximated to something like order; the abilities and energies of all persons were required in the arduous duties of daily life, and in this country the monasteries of all descriptions were dissolved, their inmates dispersed, and their possessions vested in

<sup>1</sup> Walbran's *Memorials of Fountains*, vol. I., *pref.* pp. xxv. and xxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> Elliott's *Horæ Apocalyptia*, vol. II., p. 62. Daubigne's *History of the Reformation*, vol. I., p. 58-94 to 103.

the Crown. The only regret is, that the vast property with which these Houses had been endowed should have been disposed of without any provision being made for the maintenance of many public objects which urgently required it; but in expressing regret at the occurrence of this state of things, it must be borne in mind that these proceedings were authorised by both Houses of Parliament, composed chiefly of members holding the same faith as the inmates of the establishments which they suppressed and whose estates they confiscated.

Since then, their much renowned and sumptuous fanes  
Throughout the land have sunk into decay;  
The cloister and the shrine deserted both,  
Save when some traveller, or antiquary,  
Roams o'er the vast and solitary place,  
To muse on the events of other days.

### The Seals

OF THE HOUSE, as at present known, are as follows:—One has the Virgin and Child on a throne, within an ornamental shrine, between the letters T. T., with the legend ✠ SIGILLV... COMMVNE. DE. KYRKESTAL.—(*see woodcut*); another is stated by Thoresby,<sup>1</sup> and subsequently by Dr. Burton,<sup>2</sup> to have had a similar bearing, with the legend ✠ T. QVID. PATE... VNA. VALET. And there is another stated to be appended to a lease dated in the year 1312, from the Monastery to Laurentius de Arthington, of meadow and land on Arthington Bank, having the legend SIGILLVM. CONVENTVS. DE. KIRKSTALL.<sup>3</sup> Of the SEALS OF THE ABBOTS, the following varieties occur:—One bearing the Virgin and Child, with the legend ✠ S. ABBACIE. DE. KIRKESTAL, is appended to a charter of Adam, which occurs in the year 1249. The seal of Hugh

<sup>1</sup> Ducatus Leodiensis, p. 165. <sup>2</sup> Monasticon Eboracense, p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Jone's History of Harewood, p. 230.



de Mikelay, who was Abbot in the year 1259, and a counter-seal of the house, are given by Dr. Whitaker.<sup>1</sup> The former consists of an Abbot holding a crosier and a book, with the legend ✠ SIGILLVM . ABBATIS . DE . KIRKESTAL; and the latter of a hand holding a crosier, in the field a star, with the legend CONTRA . SIGIL . DE KIRKST . . . . (*see woodcuts*).



<sup>1</sup> History of Craven, *plate*, p. 55.

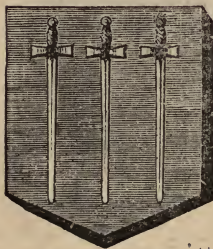


There is also a seal of Abbot Hugh de Grymston, who occurs in the year 1284. It bears the figure of an Abbot with a chalice and crosier, on the dexter side a human face, with a cross above, and a fleur-de-lis beneath: on the sinister, the principal object is defaced, and there only appears a star above and a cross beneath, with the following legend: . . . . . ATIS . DE . KIRKESTALL.—(see woodcut.)



For the notice of the first-named common seal and that of Abbot Hugh de Grymston, I am indebted to William Boyne, Esq., F.S.A., who states, in his letter to me, that they are attached to a deed in the office of the Duchy of Lancaster, dated in the year 1287. This Common Seal is also attached, but in a broken state, to a deed in the possession of Edward Hailstone, Esq., F.S.A., dated 2nd July, 1518, relating to some property at Bowling, near Bradford.

### The Arms



of the monastery, are azure, three swords, their points in base, hilts, and pommels, or; (see woodcut).—Although it was usual for religious houses to assume the armorial bearings of their founders, yet this has not been the case with Kirkstall, as these are the arms of William de Poictou, the chief



lord of the fee, on a portion of which the monastery was erected. I have found, on looking over a manuscript collection of copies of Charters relating to the Abbey, one from this nobleman, with a drawing of his seal appended,—a shield bearing three swords, with the legend SIGIL : WILLI : PICTAVESIS : These arms are, as previously stated, carved in oak, in the church of Bernoldswic, and they were formerly to be seen in stained glass in one of the windows of the Parish Church of Leeds.<sup>1</sup>

### The Library

would doubtless consist of works on theology and the classics, lives of saints, and the usual legendary lore of the period ; but no catalogue has, that I am aware of, been transmitted to our times. Many monasteries contained large and valuable libraries, our early chronicles were compiled in the cloister, and the well-known work of Richard, of Cirencester, on Roman Britain, had its origin there. But the studies of the monks were sometimes of an unprofitable character, alchemy and astrology occupying no inconsiderable portion of their time,<sup>2</sup> as is evidenced by the contents of the libraries of some of the larger houses, and by Sir George Ripley, a Canon in the Priory of Bridlington, having a dispensation from the Pope to exempt him from attending to his devotional duties to allow him time to discover the philosopher's stone.<sup>3</sup> It was a rule of the Cistercian Order that no works on canon or civil law should be kept in the libraries of their monasteries, perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Thoresby's *Ducatus Leodiensis*, *Appendix*, plate xiii., p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Prickett's *History of the Priory Church of Bridlington*, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Whitaker's *History of Craven*, p. 405. Young's *History of Whitby*, Vol. II., p. 918. *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, Vol. III., *Appendix*, p. 83.

with a view to check litigious dispositions on the part of the monks,<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to know that the history of the parent house of Fountains was written by Hugh, a monk of Kirkstall, in the former part of the 13th century, from the dictation of Serlo, a venerable monk of this place, who had lived to a patriarch's age, and was present at the secession and the subsequent departure of the brotherhood from St. Mary's at York, and had witnessed most of the varied scenes he has so graphically recorded.<sup>2</sup>

The Chronicle of Kirkstall, compiled in the 13th century, and preserved in the Bodelian Library, Oxford, contains the history of the establishment from the first settlement at Bernoldswic to the time of Abbot John de Bridesall. I have a translation of it in my possession, I should say the only one, which, although rather verbose, is a most interesting document, and is the source from which the information as to the succession of the Abbots and the affairs of the House, to the commencement of the 14th century, is principally taken.

### Testamentary Burials.

Robert de Lacy, 1193. Henri de Paulino, son of William de Alreton. Robert de Bernes. Thomas, son of Ralph de Beston. Walter, son of Adam Sampson, of Pudsey. William, son of Hugh de Lelay. William de Lelay. Nigel de Horsforde. Sigherit, daughter of Samson de Alreton. Adam Samson, of Pudsey. Robert, son of Hugh de Alreton, Margaret, widow of Heli ad Fontem, of Bramhope.

<sup>1</sup> *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, Vol. I., *pref.*, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Walbran's *Guide to Ripon*, &c. (5th Edition) p. 64.

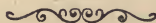
## List of Abbots.

|    |               |    |   |       |                               |      |                  |
|----|---------------|----|---|-------|-------------------------------|------|------------------|
| 12 | Stephen.....  | 1  | ALEXANDER .....   | ..... | <i>elected 19 May..</i>       | 1147 | <i>died.</i>     |
|    | Henry II. ... | 2  | RALPH HAGETH .....  | ..... | <i>occurs...</i>              | 1182 | <i>resigned.</i> |
|    | Richard I.... | 3  | LAMBERT.....  | ..... | <i>occurs...</i>              | 1191 | <i>died.</i>     |
|    | John .....    | 4  | TURGESIUS.....  | ..... | <i>occurs...</i>              | 1200 | <i>resigned.</i> |
|    | Do. ....      | 5  | HELYAS.....   | ..... | <i>occurs...</i>              | 1209 |                  |
|    | Do .....      | 6  | RALPH DE NEWCASTLE.....                                       | ..... | —... —                        |      | <i>died.</i>     |
|    | Do .....      | 7  | WALTER .....  | ..... | —... —                        |      | <i>died.</i>     |
|    | Henry III..   | 8  | MAURICE.....  | ..... | <i>succeeded...</i>           | 1222 | <i>died.</i>     |
| 33 | Do. ....      | 9  | ADAM.....   | ..... | <i>succeeded 16 April...</i>  | 1249 |                  |
| 43 | Do .....      | 10 | HUGH DE MICKELAY. <i>created 16 March...</i>                  |       |                               | 1259 | <i>died.</i>     |
|    | Do .....      | 11 | SIMON .....   | ..... | <i>created 18 May...</i>      | 1262 | <i>died.</i>     |
| 53 | Do .....      | 12 | WILLIAM DE LEDES <i>succeeded 6 March...</i>                  |       |                               | 1269 | <i>resigned.</i> |
| 3  | Edward I....  | 13 | GIBERT DE CORTLES. <i>...created 23 Aug ...</i>               |       |                               | 1275 | <i>resigned.</i> |
| 9  | Do. ....      | 14 | HENRY KARR.....   | ..... | <i>created 29 November...</i> | 1280 |                  |
|    | Do .....      | 15 | HUGH DE GRYMSTON .....  | ..... | <i>created 17 Sept.</i>       | 1284 | <i>died.</i>     |
|    | Do .....      | 16 | JOHN DE BRIDESALL .....                                       | ..... | <i>succeeded...</i>           | 1304 | <i>died.</i>     |
|    | Edward II.    | 17 | WALTER .....  | ..... | <i>elected..</i>              | 1313 |                  |
|    | Edward III    | 18 | WILLIAM... ..   | ..... | <i>occurs..</i>               | 1334 |                  |
|    | Do .....      | 19 | ROGER DE LEDES .....  | ..... | <i>confirmed 15 Dec ...</i>   | 1349 |                  |
|    | Do .....      | 20 | JOHN DE THORNBERG.....  | ..... | <i>occurs...</i>              | 1369 |                  |
|    | Richard II.   | 21 | JOHN DE BARDESEY .....  | ..... | <i>occurs...</i>              | 1392 |                  |
|    | Henry VI....  | 22 | WILLIAM GRAYSON .....   | ..... | <i>occurs...</i>              | 1451 | <i>deposed.</i>  |
| 7  | Edward IV     | 23 | THOS WYMBERSLEY, <i>confirmed 6 April...</i>                  |       |                               | 1468 | <i>died.</i>     |
| 14 | Henry VII.    | 24 | ROBERT KELYNBEC... <i>elected 21 August...</i>                |       |                               | 1499 |                  |
| 17 | Do .....      | 25 | WILLIAM STOCKDALE.....  | ..... | <i>elected 10 Dec....</i>     | 1501 |                  |
| 1  | Henry VIII.   | 26 | WILLIAM MARSHALL .. ...                                       | ..... | <i>elected 5 Dec....</i>      | 1509 |                  |
| 31 | Do... ..      | 27 | JOHN RIPELEY, <i>elected 21 July, 1528. 1540 surrendered.</i> |       |                               |      |                  |





## Kirkstall Abbey.



One holy Henry reared the Gothic halls,  
And bade the prior inmates rest in peace ;  
Another Henry the kind gift recalls,  
And bids devotion's hallowed echoes cease.



THE monastic ruins of Yorkshire have been remarked upon as amongst the most valuable examples of art remaining in the country, and, owing to the sequestered sites of most of them, have preserved a freshness and sharpness of sculptured detail which are sought in vain among similar remains in the midland and southern counties.<sup>1</sup>

The ruins of this Monastery give a very correct idea of its original construction, which was in conformity with the general disposition of Cistercian Houses ; it is said to be, in one respect, the most interesting of any of the monastic edifices in this country ; in that more of the original Norman arrangement of the offices surrounding the cloister

<sup>1</sup> Archæological Journal, vol. III, p. 101.



court is preserved, than in any other building of the kind; <sup>1</sup> and that it is for scientific purposes, or rather for the history of architectural science, a perfectly unwrought mine.<sup>2</sup> In the original fabric there have been no deviations from the first plan, it has had the advantage of having been erected under the care and supervision of one man,—of no mean order of mind—the Abbot Alexander—and though in ruins, it remains a monument of his skill, taste, and perseverance.<sup>3</sup>

They dream't not of a perishable home,  
Who thus could build.

The architecture is of the transition period, from Norman to Early English, with considerable additions of a later date; but this transition was gradual, rendering it occasionally very difficult to decide on the character of some of the remains.<sup>4</sup> The principal additions may be briefly enumerated as follows:—The insertion of the East and other windows in the Church, the placing of the lanterns on the angles of the Nave and Choir, and the Transepts, and the turrets on the gables between them; the enlargement of the Chapter House; the improvement of the Lavatory; the south extension of the Refectory; the reconstruction of the Kitchens; the erection of the Abbot's House; the Hospitium and its Offices, and subsequent alterations therein; the raising of the Tower to its present height; and the closing of several ancient doorways.

It is stated that amongst the remains of this description in the North of England, the second place may be assigned to Kirkstall, whether as a

<sup>1</sup> Report of M. H. Bloxam, Esq.

<sup>2</sup> Letters of J. Walbran, Esq., F.S.A.

<sup>3</sup> Whitaker's Loidis and Elmete, p. 118.

<sup>4</sup> Rickman's Architecture, p. 15.

picture in a landscape, or as a specimen of architecture; in the former view it must yield the palm to Bolton, and in the latter to Fountains.<sup>1</sup>

The West entrance to the Church of Fountain is, however, much inferior, both in design and workmanship to that of Kirkstall, and I think the same remark will apply to the interior of part of the former House, the plain, though massive columns of Kirkstall, will not bear comparison with the elegant clustered ones and the imposing perspective of Fountains.

The **Gate House** was situate in the boundary wall on the west side of the enclosure; it has, with the exception of its solitary portals, been demolished, and the materials removed; but the old road to the Monastery still passes through, and a stone tablet, having inscribed upon it "VESPER'S GATE, A.D., 1152," is affixed in the south side. A beautiful view of the Abbey is obtained by approaching it through this gateway.

The **North Gate House**, situate about 120 yards north-west of the Abbey, is in a good state of preservation; the lower portion, having the arches enclosed, forms a spacious vaulted apartment in the residence of the late J. O. Butler, Esq. A circular staircase, in the western wall, leads to the upper part of the building. According to tradition, the last Abbot resided here after the surrender of the establishment and the dark oak panelling therein was brought thence at that period. A stone coffin was found a few years ago in the centre of the apartment, about three feet below the surface, containing some mouldering bones, and a large quantity of dust; also a small

<sup>1</sup> Whitaker's History of Craven, p. 69.

silver spoon, and a silver farthing of Edward IV., struck at the York Mint, but much defaced; it had at the time of interment been placed under the head of the deceased. The coffin was removed to the Chapter House. I believe that these remains were those of the last Abbot, interred privately here by some of his surviving friends, as previously alluded to, and in accordance with the rites of his Church. The oak bedstead in which this Abbot died, and some other pieces of furniture formerly belonging to the Monastery, are yet known to be in existence.

On recently making some alterations outside this building, a carved stone, about three feet in length, represented by the annexed woodcut, and a small cup, were discovered.



The Church is cruciform in character, but does not stand due east and west; perhaps for the reason that the line points to that part of the horizon where the sun rose on the day of dedication. It measures 224 feet and 6 inches in length: 118 feet and 3 inches in breadth, including the transepts; and 62 feet and 6 inches across the nave and aisles; and is, with the exception of part of the north wall, and two of the adjoining columns, in an almost perfect condition. The west doorway is very beautiful, consisting of five receding semi-circular arches, the centre one bearing the zig-zag moulding, the others plain; but the cylindrical shafts, formerly attached to the sides,

have all been removed. This part of the building was thickly covered with ivy, until the occurrence of the great storm in the early part of the year 1839, when it was destroyed by the influence of the spray brought by the wind from the western coast. The North-west doorway, which appears to have had a porch, is also highly ornamented; it is of the same order as the other, the outer one bearing the embattled moulding, an inner one the zig-zag, and the others plain. It is much to be regretted that this entrance has sustained some little injury, and is now walled up. The nave is divided from the aisles by two rows of massy clustered columns, each eight in number, including the piers adjoining the transepts, with square pedestals, some of which are left in an unfinished state.

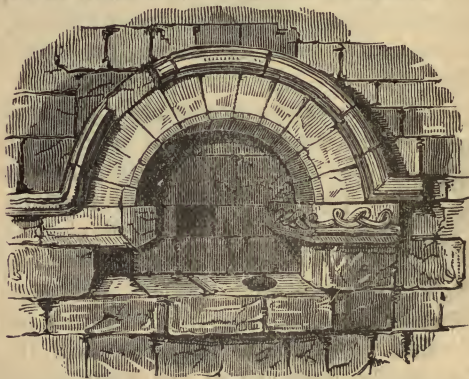


The annexed woodcut represents an ornament of interlaced scroll work on one of them.<sup>1</sup> The columns support pointed arches, over which is a range of semi-circular arched windows, and two doorways, of the same order, lead from the south side of the church into the cloister court. A circular staircase, still in good condition, at the west end of the south aisle, gives access to the upper portion of this part of the fabric; and a similar one, now ruinous, leads from the steps of the dormitory to an open arcade of six semi-circular arches, supported by circular columns, (two of which have been removed and ought to be replaced,) across the south transept to the upper portion of this part of the church. The roofs of the nave and

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note A.



transepts, being originally of wood, covered with lead, no longer exist; but those of the chancel and the aisles being of stone, yet remain nearly perfect. From the marks on the tower it is evident that there have been two roofs at two different periods. Some iron rings for the suspension of lamps may yet be seen affixed to the intersecting ribs of the vaulting of the south aisle. In the south wall of the chancel is an arched recess, which bears the marks of having been cut away in some places, probably for the oaken seats of the sedilia; on each side of this recess is a piscina and ambra, the former—the most easterly one—is represented in the annexed woodcut.



Extending across the chancel is the usual elevated footpace for the high altar, which is stated to have been of white freestone, and to have been destroyed in the early part of last century. A tradition states that the perpetrators of this deed of mischief came to an early and untimely end.<sup>1</sup>

A trench was recently dug across the chancel,

<sup>1</sup> Gough's *Camden's Britannia*, Vol. III., p. 283. Gent's *History of Ripon, Travels*, p. 28.



about four feet deep, in the expectation of finding some remains of the altar, but with the exception of some bones and a few encaustic tiles, the search was fruitless. It is pleasant to linger on this spot, though despoiled and ruinous, and to recall the past, when the vested Abbot stood on solemn festivals amidst circling clouds of incense, and accompanied by the chaunt of the monks celebrating mass.

This part of the church was paved with encaustic tiles of varied design.<sup>1</sup> The east window is of much later date than the others, it was inserted, most likely, during the latter part of the 13th century, in the place of the three Norman lights, but its beautiful tracery is entirely destroyed. The wall below is modern, and has been built higher than the original one, and ought to be taken down, so as to shew the window in its full proportions. The old engravings of the Abbey shew that its grounds were at one period open, a public footway passing through the church, and many were the injuries the building sustained in consequence, not only from persons in the neighbourhood, but from parties of gypsies, who frequently made this part of the Monastery their camp, the marks of their fires are yet to be seen on several parts of the walls.

On each side of the Chancel are three Chapels, with vaulted roofs, entered through pointed arches. It has not been ascertained to what saints they were dedicated: in the south wall of each of them is a piscina and ambra. The ambra in the most northerly Chapel, is in the North Wall. The altar stones are irretrievably lost; on the floor of the most southerly Chapel, the greatest portion of the decorative tiles found in the Abbey have been relaid with care

<sup>1</sup> Thoresby's Diary, vol. II., p. 286.

and attention to their combined design, the whole being preserved from injury by an iron railing, but a few more winters will deface them. On a number of the smaller of these tiles several letters of the alphabet occur in the characters of the period. The windows of the Chapels are not the original ones, but have been enlarged at a much later period, all being of a different style of architecture. In the centre of the gable of the south transept is one of those windows of pointed oval form, known by the name of *Vesica Picis*, the religious symbol of the fish, in which a window of later date has been inserted.

Four pointed arches, springing from as many massive clustered piers at the angles of the nave, transepts, and chancel, supported the tower, which, according to the practice of the twelfth century, was carried only a little higher than the roof, as shewn by the Norman corbels yet remaining; the tower was raised to its present height only a short time before the dissolution.<sup>1</sup> On the night of the 27th January, 1779, one of the piers on which the tower rested suddenly gave way, and the entire north and west sides, with a portion of the east one, were thrown to the ground; part of the *debris* remained in the north aisle and transept until recently, it being considered inexpedient to remove it, as it formed a kind of abutment to the adjoining angles of nave and transept.<sup>2</sup>

What does not fade ?

The tower that long had stood

The crash of thunder, and the warring winds,

Shook by the slow but sure destroyer, Time,

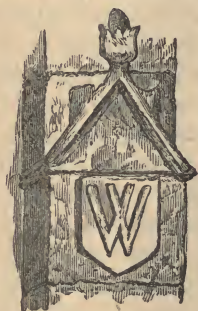
Now hangs in doubtless ruins o'er its base.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note B.

Report of M. H. Bloxam, Esq.

It has, however, been carefully removed, and the angle in question secured by other means, thus affording a full and unimpeded view of the whole length of this noble Church. It is stated that within a few days after the fall of the tower several small smoking pipes were discovered, embedded in the mortar, a proof that prior to the introduction of tobacco, the practice of inhaling the smoke of some indigenous vegetable prevailed in England.<sup>1</sup>

On the upper part of the buttresses of the shattered tower, at the angles of the walls yet standing, are four shields, much defaced, bearing the letters **W** and **M** alternately, as shewn by the annexed woodcuts.



These letters, I have no doubt, are the initials of Abbot William Marshall, elected in 1509, and it may thence be inferred that in his time the tower was raised to its present height, perhaps for the purpose of placing a peal of bells therein, but whether it was ever carried into effect I have not been able to ascertain.<sup>1</sup>

In all probability, therefore, but for Abbot William Marshall's imprudent addition to this Tower, the beautiful Norman one would have now been in existence, and the body of the Church would have remained entire. The elegant Turrets at the several angles of the Church, with other minor exterior ornamental work, were also added about this period. With the exception of some pieces of a tombstone grooved for a brass filleting, no discovery of monumental remains has rewarded the expense and labour of levelling this part of the building, although, doubtless, it was the burial place of many families of distinction. Some years ago was found, within the west doorway, and only a few inches below the surface, the place where the lead was melted into bars for removal, when stripped from the roof at the dissolution, together with a quantity of scoria, and the stones of which the furnace was constructed, reddened by the action of fire, are still remaining. A breed of fine white owls at one time took up their abode in this part of the Abbey, and it was very interesting on a summer's night to see them flit slowly about the silent and lonely pile.

The *Sacristy* is a small vaulted apartment adjoining the Church, from which it is entered by a door-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note C.



way in the south transept, in it was kept the vessels, books, and vestments belonging to the Church, and the real or supposed relics of saints. It is now used as a place of deposit for tiles and other unimportant articles found in the ruins. There has been a small gloomy upper room in this place, as appears by the holes in the walls for the floor, and a small window still remaining. A large portion of the roof has, however, fallen.

The **East Dormitory** was for the use of the **Monks**, access to it is obtained by a flight of steps leading from the south transept of the Church, as before-mentioned.<sup>1</sup> It extended from thence southward over the Chapter House and the rooms adjoining, and would originally be divided into separate cells by wooden partitions on each side, with a broad walk down the centre, lighted at nights by a large lamp. Nearly one-third part of this Dormitory fell during the winter of 1826, owing to the percolation of snow-water through the floor. This extensive apartment, with another of more recent date to the eastward, is so placed as to afford the readiest and most sheltered means of access for their occupants to the nocturnal services of the Church. The raised road at present leading from the Church to the above-named apartments is very unsightly.

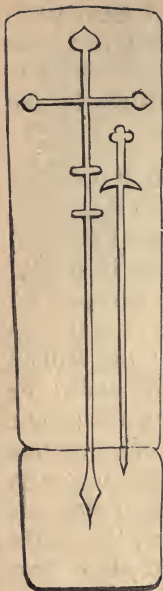
The **Cloister Court** is on the south side of the Church—(See page 17). It includes an area of 143 feet long by 115 feet broad; the north and east sides yet remain in their original state, but the doorways on the south side, including a large semi-circular archway, have been walled up, and a portion of the wall on the west side being in a dangerous

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note D.



state, has been partially rebuilt, and is also supported by buttresses. On each side of this court was the *Ambulatory*, a covered walk, where the monks could pass to and fro in wet weather, without exposure; holes in the wall shew where the beams for supporting the roof were inserted. The exterior sides of this walk have, doubtless, been of timber, but such erections were frequently of stone, as may still be seen in several of our ancient Cathedrals. The western portion must have been of stone, as a wall appears to have extended from the north to the south sides of the Court, thereby forming a passage, to which the large archway alluded to above has originally given entrances from the south side of the Abbey, but has been walled up at a later period, leaving only a small doorway remaining, now also closed. The small narrow doorway, with a pointed arch, in the south-east angle of this Court, probably led to a staircase which afforded access to the rooms above the Refectory, and also to the Dormitory of the monks, as appears by an entrance, now closed, in the upper part of the western wall. It is to the circumstance of this Court having, until recently, been used as an orchard, that it owes in a great measure its present almost perfect condition.

This part of the Monastery, from having been the burial place of the monks generally, as well as for the wealthy laity, might have been expected to have furnished some memorials of those laid to rest within its enclosure, but these have been few and unimportant. There is a fragment of a stone moulding, bearing the letter *B*, in high relief; part of a gravestone, inscribed *Jones . S . .*; and a broken sepulchral slab, six feet in length, bearing an incised



cross and sword, which may perhaps be assigned to the 14th century. The latter were found near the centre of the Cloister Court, and beneath it were the mouldering bones of a tall man, who had, doubtless, once wielded the sword represented on his tomb.— (See annexed woodcut). Portions of two other gravestones have also been found here, of which nothing more of the inscriptions were legible, than on one ... *M'nachus hujus domus A.D. MDXXX.*, and on the other *Ricard...* The remains of a coffin, consisting of plates of beaten iron,<sup>1</sup> and also a stone one, containing a skeleton of large size, the lid of which was composed of encaustic tiles, bearing various devices and letters, were also discovered here last century.<sup>2</sup>

There are two men whose last resting places I could wish to ascertain ; they are the pious and persevering Abbot Alexander and the venerable monk Serlo ; the former would doubtless be interred in the Chapter House, and the latter would sleep amongst his brethren in the silent court. Their works, however, still remain to attest their worth, the one in the noble Monastery, and the other in the pages of the ancient Chronicle of Fountains. The view on entering the Cloister Court from the west is very beautiful,

<sup>1</sup> Whitaker's History of Craven, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Thoresby's Ducatus Leodiensis. Appendix, p. 138. History of the Abbey. 1799, p. 27.

and is certainly the most attractive and picturesque part of the Monastery, and it has been stated that with the exception of that of Fountains, there is perhaps no Monastic Cloister Quadrangle in the kingdom so entire as this.<sup>1</sup>

The **Chapter House** is entered from the west side of the Cloister Court by two circular-headed doorways, from which most of the cylindrical shafts have been removed ; it measures 64 feet and 6 inches in length, and 30 feet and 6 inches in breadth. It is supported by two massive columns, from which spring the intersecting arches of the groined roof ; the column nearest to the entrance has been surrounded by detached cylindrical shafts, the bases of which may still be observed. It has, with a view of preventing its decay, been cased with unsightly modern masonry. This room has been considerably enlarged since its first erection, by the addition of the whole of the eastern portion, in the early part of the fourteenth century, the filling in of which is ragstone, but that of the ancient vaulting is of rubble. Several large stone coffins are in the walls and in the bases of the deeply-recessed windows, in one of which, a few years ago, the bones of an aged person were found, but no inscription of any kind has been discovered, although here doubtless repose the ashes of many of the Abbots, and of benefactors to the Abbey. Other coffins have been made use of as building material, by being filled up solid, and inserted in both the interior and exterior walls. The annexed woodcut represents one of the

<sup>1</sup> Whitaker's Loidis and Elmete, p. 119.



corbels in this apartment. This place was lighted by two large windows at the east end, in addition to the small narrow ones adjoining, at the north and south sides, but the former ones have been destroyed by pulling down the ancient wall, and erecting in its place an unsightly modern one, which I should like to see either removed altogether, or constructed more in accordance with the one it superseded.

This wall, which renders the apartment gloomy, was not in existence in Gent's time, as he describes the place "as an arched chamber leading to the cemetery."<sup>1</sup> The iron staples for the suspension of lamps at the intersecting ribs of the groined roof have been rudely torn away.

This interesting part of the building is not only uncommon in design, but possesses much of the sublime, and is likely to detain, for a time, the Antiquary, the Historian, and the Scholar, to muse over the various scenes which have here often occurred;—the chapter met in solemn conclave,—the election of Abbots, the arranging of processions,—and all the other business connected with the affairs of a large monastic establishment, the closing act of which would be the enforced signing and sealing of the surrender, and the breaking of the common seal in the presence of the Royal Commissioners.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gent's *History of Ripon, Travels*, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix, Note E.



Adjoining the Chapter House, on the south, are two small apartments, the nearest of which, I think, has been used for the reception of the dead previous to interment, and the other has been a staircase leading from the Cloister Court to the east dormitory.<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that the window at the west end is at present walled up, as well as a doorway in the south wall. The former of these places was originally open to the Cloister Court; the archway, it appears, has been filled up by the present wall, containing a low doorway, with a small window above it, of the same character as the doorway in the south-east angle of the court. Adjoining the latter place is a long arched passage, now walled up at the east end, which led from the Cloister Court to the south-eastern part of the establishment; and south of this is what I believe to have been the **Abbot's Hall**, where that dignitary entertained his friends and distinguished guests. It has been a large vaulted apartment of very superior construction, with a row of four columns down the centre, supporting a series of semi-circular arches, and measures about 76 feet in length, and 29 feet 6 inches in width; it became a hopeless ruin during the winter of 1825, owing to the cause stated in the account of the dormitory of the monks, beneath which it is situated. A view of the interior of this apartment, as it appeared previous to its fall, is given in the *Dugdalis Monasticon*,<sup>2</sup> and is there designated the "crypt," but erroneously so, as there is no such place about the building. Immediately south of this room is a passage, which formerly communicated with it, and adjoining which

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note F.

<sup>2</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1806, vol. V., p. 527.



is found the usual conveniences for the Abbot and the monks.

The remains of the *Lavatory*, situate between the entrances to the ancient Refectory, now closed, still form an interesting feature in the south wall of the Cloister Court ; the upper portion is of the decorated English style, and has probably been inserted near the close of the thirteenth century. The annexed woodcut exhibits a part of it, but the continuance of the work is broken by injudicious modern repairs.



The lower portion in which the monks performed their ablutions has been destroyed, but long pieces of the lead piping which supplied it with water have recently been discovered.

The *Refectory* is situate to the south-east of the Cloister Court, from which it was entered by three doorways, now walled up, and, as originally constructed, extended from east to west, about 70 feet. Either the increase of the household, or an alteration in the rules of the Order, caused this ancient apartment to be considerably enlarged, or altogether superseded by another and more spacious one, erected,

it is thought, in the fifteenth century, commencing at and including the western portion of the original structure, and extending thence in a southwardly direction about 98 feet. On the western side of this room is a fireplace about six feet in width. Over the Refectory would be the **Library**, interesting to the Historian, as being the place where the Ancient Chronicles of Fountains and Kirkstall were written and kept. South-west of which are the remains of the **Kitchen** and other offices in connection therewith. In clearing away the rubbish from the former place, the ovens, together with the flues under them, as well as the site where an iron cauldron had been fixed, were found in a moderately perfect state. At the south-west angle of this room is the hatchway, through which the provisions were passed to the Refectory. Westward of the Refectory is the **Common-Room** of the monastery, and adjoining is a passage, about 20 feet wide, with a circular-headed archway at each end, leading to the Church and Cloister Court; the northern one has long been closed, but that on the south is still open, and attracts attention by its ample dimensions. There is a small beehive-shaped oven in the west wall of this passage.

The **Cloisters** are situate on the west side of the Court, and were 172 feet 6 inches in length, and 29 feet in breadth; when entire, there was a row of ten columns down the centre, supporting a series of semi-circular arches, constituting a long double-arched walk for the monks, over which was the **West Dormitory**, appropriated for the use of the **Lay Brothers**, but now no longer in existence, it having fallen during the winter of 1746. According

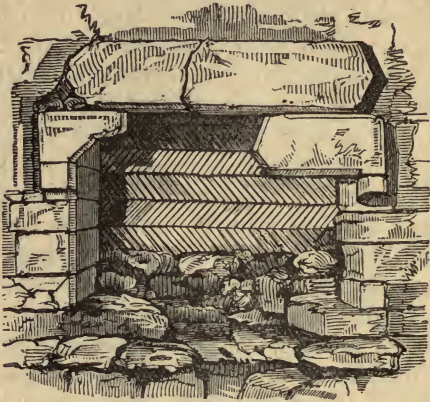
to the plan given by Dr. Burton,<sup>1</sup> this part of the building was entered from the Abbey grounds by a doorway in the west wall, apparently of considerable width, while others on the eastern side gave access to the Cloister Court, and the large open passage leading to it. His plan also shews a small apartment at the north end, the existence of which is not borne out by an inspection of the place. It is much to be regretted that this part of the Monastery has been so much destroyed; a considerable portion of the west wall was, however, standing at the close of the last century, as appears by a plan then published.<sup>2</sup> Some of the corbels from which the arches sprung yet remain in the walls, and a fragment of one the columns may be seen a few yards west of the site. In the eastern wall are to be seen the remains of an arch, the stones of which are fitted together in a peculiar manner. This kind of arch, though rare, occurs in other ecclesiastical buildings; and in recently perusing a work on Eastern Travels,<sup>3</sup> I find that others of a similar character are to be found in the ruins of a khan, at a place called Douraan, and in the ancient theatre at Smyrna, this form being adopted for greater stability.

The **Abbot's Residence**, with the **OFFICES** usually attached thereto, are situate to the south-east of the Monastery; the residence forms no part of the original structure, but is altogether of a later date and different composition, and in the worst state of preservation. In one of the rooms is a fireplace worthy of attention, the stones composing the backing being laid in the herring-bone pattern, as shewn by

<sup>1</sup> *Monasticon Eboracense*, plate, p. 288.      <sup>2</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1790.

<sup>3</sup> *Hamilton's Researches in Asia Minor*, vol. I., p. 324.

the annexed woodcut.<sup>1</sup> There is also a water drain in the west wall, and a similar convenience and fireplace in the wall of the room formerly over this. These,



I believe to be the sitting-room and lodging-room of the Abbot, the only occupant of which is now a goodly elm tree. Adjoining these apartments is a staircase, and westward of which are the private kitchens attached to the Abbot's house, which have been vaulted and substantially built, and appears to be of much older construction than his residence. There are two square cupboards in the west wall of the first of these rooms, and the fireplace has been closed at a later period and an oven constructed therein. Outside the south door of the second room is the place into which the refuse of the kitchens were thrown, and in which broken pottery, beef bones, oyster shells and cockle shells were found, the latter being of small size, and almost as fresh as when

<sup>1</sup> Thoresby's Diary. vol. I., page 288.



they were removed from the table of the last Abbot. A similar discovery occurred during the recent excavations at Fountains Abbey, in respect of which it has been remarked, that trifling and worthless as these objects are, they seem, as coming from the place where forgotten hands had cast them, to connect the spectator with those whom three centuries have divided from personal association more intimately than the ruins of the vast building in which they had so long been hidden from view.<sup>1</sup> As to the enduring nature of oyster shells, it is stated by the Rev. Dr. Bruce, that they have been frequently found in stations previously occupied by Roman troops more than fourteen centuries ago.<sup>2</sup> Over the kitchen was the *Abbot's Chapel*, identified by the *Vesica Piscis* in the west gable, now walled up, the entrance to which was from the before-named staircase, but the floor has long since fallen down, and the materials taken away. In recently excavating on the north side of the Abbot's kitchen, amongst other minor articles there was found a large Gurgyle, formed of a distorted human face, with the mouth wide enough to allow the rain water to pass through.

Until recently, the ground to the north of this portion of the Abbey was covered with shrubs, partially concealing broken walls, and lines of foundations; these have, to a great extent, however, been cleared away, with a very satisfactory result, disclosing to view the remains of the long-lost *Hospitium*, with its requisite outbuildings and offices, erected on the site of a more ancient one. The *West Hall* has at one

<sup>1</sup> Williams' Guide to Ripon, &c., (5th edition), p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Roman Wall, p. 138.



time been a very spacious apartment, measuring 83 feet in length by 48 feet and 9 inch in breadth, with two rows of stone columns, extending from east to west, the spaces between which appear to have been at a later period walled up, evidently by unskilled hands, and the apartment reduced in size. The fireplaces, two of them with hearths and stone fenders attached, and a circular one near the east end, over which may have hung a cauldron, are yet remaining. At the south west angle is a small square room, probably the buttery or pantry, with a separate entrance; and in a place outside, a few steps below the level of the ground, a small quantity of coal was found, being the remains of the last supply. Above the hall would be the dormitories, the foundations of a staircase, roughly built, giving access thereto, may yet be seen. A well-constructed sewer, with a pointed arch yet to be seen, connected the drainage of these buildings with the main drain of the Abbey. This place was probably reduced to its present state by the stones having been taken away for the purpose of repairing the bridge at Leeds, as appears by the accounts of the Churchwardens of that town for the year 1538;<sup>1</sup> at the same time it is highly probable that the upper stories of this and many of the domestic buildings were "post and pan" work,<sup>2</sup> and that, consequently, they would either soon be removed for the sake of the timber, or would rapidly fall to decay. I am inclined to believe that some of the monks, after the surrender of their home, being without a place of refuge, may have made some alterations in this portion of the buildings to meet their new requirements, and have

<sup>1</sup> Thoresby's *Ducatus Leodiensis*, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from J. R. Walbran, Esq., F.S.A.

continued to dwell in it during the remainder of their lives. Where is the heart which could not feel some amount of commiseration for those old and lonely men bereft of all they had once\* possessed, and thrown upon an unsympathising world, yet unwilling to leave their late abode, and scantily subsisting on pensions<sup>1</sup> doled out to them with a niggard hand. Their ideas of what was right might be at variance with ours, yet they display the feelings common to all, the love of home, and their disinclination to leave it.

The **Granary**, a most interesting building of its kind, with narrow loophole windows, adjoins the cloisters at the south-west angle, extending westwardly about 65 ft., and is in a fair state of preservation, in some measure owing to its having been used partly for the purpose for which it was erected. The archways in the lower portion are walled up on both sides, and two modern buttresses have been built against the south side to keep it in position. There is a well in the eastern part of this place, now covered over. Dr. Burton, and others following him, designate this building the Infirmary, but from the absence of fireplaces, and for other reasons, I think it has been what I describe it. The lower part may have been used as a thrashing floor, in addition to which would allow laden waggons to enter, from which grain might be raised to the upper floor; but if this be correct, I am at a loss as to the portion of the building to which the **Infirmary** should be assigned. It may probably have been over the **Common Room** and the large passage before described, which is not an unlikely place, as this portion

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note G.

of the Monastery was not occupied solely by the sick, but infirm aged monks were allowed to retire there to linger out their few remaining years. It is possible that the upper portion of the building might be used as an Infirmary for the Lay-Brothers, but still the same want of conveniences occurs.

In 1741, an outbuilding, stated to have been a granary, was taken down, it was covered with slates brought from Elland, near Halifax, which had become so hardened as to resemble steel rather than stone.<sup>1</sup>

The **Corn Mill** is situate about 80 yards north-west of the Abbey, its foundations have been partially uncovered, and the chiselled blocks of stone, for the placing of the wheel and other purposes, were found as they had originally been laid down. This Mill appears to have been standing some years after the dissolution, as it is stated in the pages of Camden, "the mill and the grange remain, and the well that supplied the Abbey with water."<sup>2</sup> There are two mills mentioned as belonging to the Abbey, in a survey in the Augmentation Office, made in the reign of Henry VIII.

The site of the **Mill Pool** is distinctly observable in a field north of the road leading from the West Gatehouse, now called Vesper's Gate, which road has also served the purpose of an embankment to the pool, being composed of the soil taken from it. In the centre of it is a square outlet, which would allow the water to be drawn off when requiring it into the River Aire. The water supply was drawn from a rivulet, called Oil Mill Beck (Oyl-mil-beck),<sup>3</sup> flowing

<sup>1</sup> Parson's History of Leeds, vol. I., p. 401.

<sup>2</sup> Guaylie Camden's Britannica, vol. IV., p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> Ducatus Leodiensis, p. 168.

through Horsforth; also from a small rivulet receiving its waters from the adjacent hills, passing through Hell Hole Gill. The remains of the water-race to the pool may yet be seen a mile in length from Vesper's Gate, in a south-westerly direction, half-a-mile of which, westerly to the beck, is still in use, and supplies the Upper Works at Kirkstall Forge<sup>1</sup> with water, having also within the last few years furnished water for two ancient over-shot water wheels, now, however, not in existence. Close by may be found a noted well<sup>2</sup> (now called Diggery Well), near which lead pipes have been found in the ground, also oaken pipes with a bore of four inches diameter, made out of young oak trees, bored out of the solid, whence it is supposed that this spring water was conveyed for the use of the Abbey. The water, after leaving the mill, entered a large covered drain of quadrangular form, still remaining in a perfect state, and passed beneath the granary and other offices, situate south of the Monastery, into the river. A short distance north-west of the granary is a place where the stream could either be turned off by another channel directly into the river, or allowed to reach the Abbey and cleanse the drain, by the raising or lowering of a small floodgate, the grooves in the masonry for which are yet plainly distinguishable.

The *Malthkilns*, *Brewhouse*, *Stables*, *Workshops*, and other outbuildings, were situate on the north-western part of the walled enclosure, below the gateway, the two fields there being at present called the "Upper Malthouse Ing," and the "Lower Malthouse Ing;" and in the survey referred to, a close called "Brewhouse Croft" is mentioned, which

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix, Note H.

<sup>2</sup> *Ducatus Leodiensis*, p. 167.



names plainly indicate the sites of these buildings. In the two first-mentioned fields, several ancient tiles have been found in ploughing, of the kind formerly used in maltkilns.

The **Fish Ponds**, two in number, lay between the Monastery and the river, the larger one immediately south of the Abbot's House, and the smaller one further westward, their outline could, until recently, be traced, but the latter has been filled up with the rubbish removed from the building. There was formerly a small spring of pure water a little to the west of these fish ponds, which is now lost.

The **Gardens and Orchards** were situate in the north-east portion of the walled enclosure, which gently sloping to the south, would be the best and most salubrious site for such necessary appurtenance to a large establishment. They are mentioned in the survey previously referred to, and I have spoken to persons who remembered, some fifty years ago, a few aged plum trees remaining in this particular place, the descendants doubtless of those of the monastic period. There are no trees of historic interest standing near the Abbey, as at Fountains, Easby, and other places, rich with associations of the past, those now flourishing amidst the ruins, whatever charm they may add to them, and on this account I would not wish their removal, are but of comparatively recent growth, having arrived at maturity since the dissolution of the Monastery, There is the "Oak Farm," a short distance north of the Abbey, the name of which plainly denotes the site where some well-known denizen of the wood once reared its leafy honors; and in the adjacent village of Headingley, in the last stage of decay,



is the venerable Shire Oak, from which the Wapentake derives its name, and under whose wide-spreading branches many a monk, on visiting the distant Grange of Moor-Allerton has found a welcome shelter, alike from sunshine and storm.

There are considerable portions of the original boundary wall of the **Abbey Close** still remaining, but in a ruinous state, on the east, west, and north sides thereof, that on the latter being the most perfect, the line of the fosse outside being yet distinguishable. The river formed the southern boundary, and the extent of land enclosed within it and the walls would be about forty acres. It is matter of regret that the turnpike road from Kirkstall to Otley and Ilkley should have been made through the Abbey enclosure, as the seclusion of the place is thereby completely destroyed.

According to tradition yet extant amongst the people residing in the neighbourhood, an old house built of stones taken from the Abbey, situate a short distance north-west of the principal gateway, known by the name of "Hark to Rover," and where the keys of the place were kept more than a century ago, was a small secluded inn, of bad reputation, and used as a place of meeting by Highwaymen and Poachers. The well-known legend of "Mary the Maid of the Inn," attached to this lonely house, and many are the wild and desperate adventures which are stated to have been told within its walls by the lawless characters who assembled there.

A ground plan of the Monastery may be found in Dr. Burton's "*Monasticon Eboracense*."

There are several early engravings of the Abbey,

published in 1223 1744, and 1746-7, on the latter of which it is stated that the Abbey was founded in the year 1147, which is an error, as that year is the date of the going forth of the colony from Fountains to the original settlement at Bernoldswic. This is one of the best of the old prints, shewing the tower in its original state ; they have all become rare, but I have been fortunate in obtaining a good impression of the latter. A **Stone Cross** formerly stood some distance south of the Abbey by the side of the Old Road to Bradford, at the junction of the lane leading to Bramley, called the Outgang, but no remains of it are left ; the site, however, is still known by the name of "Stump Cross Stile." Whether this cross marked the extent of some boundary, or was erected by the monks or others for the purposes of devotion for wayfarers, I am unable to ascertain. Another **Cross**, called **Killingbeck Cross**, from being erected by either the Abbot of Kirkstall or the Vicar of Leeds, of that name, formerly stood by the road side at the south end of Sheepscar Bridge, in Leeds.

If opportunity serves, the reader should visit Kirkstall by moonlight ; but for the purpose of distinctly viewing every part for antiquarian research and examination, and for thoroughly understanding the relation of one portion of the building to another, the day, by all means, must be selected. If, however, it be wished to indulge the imagination in recalling the scenes of the misty past, then visit these venerable ruins alone in the starry eve,—no jarring element is there to interrupt the train of thought,—a solemn silence pervades the vast and solitary pile, while in the moon's pale ray, arch and

column, choir and transept, the vast proportions of the noble Church as dimly seen, will unite to impress the mind with a placid feeling, and raise it far above the ordinary events of common life.

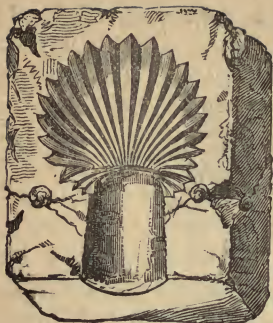
“ And home returning, soothly swear,  
Was never seen so sad and fair.”

### Discoveries

of articles of a miscellaneous character have occurred here at various times, consisting of numerous fragments of plain and ornamented earthenware, glass, lead piping, pewter spoons, a few unimportant coins, and decorative pavement tiles from the Church and the Abbot's Chapel, in considerable number, and of almost every variety of pattern and shape, most of the latter of which have been described and illustrated in coloured lithographs published by the writer.<sup>1</sup> The most interesting article found in the place is a chess piece, elaborately carved from a tusk of the walrus, with figures of men and animals, apparently the workmanship of the twelfth century, and with it were found two circular pieces of lead, which, from the description, may have been Papal *bullæ*. I do not know in what part of the building, nor under what circumstances this ancient relic was turned up, but there is a description of it, accompanied with accurate and beautiful drawings, in the *Archæological Journal*.<sup>2</sup> In one of the apartments south of the ruins, was found, during the recent excavations, a mould in Caen stone, for the purpose of casting escallop shells for disposal to

<sup>1</sup> Antiquities of Leeds, *Plates* x. to xv. inclusive.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. VI., p. 170.



annexed woodcut, of the same size as the original.



pilgrims and other persons visiting the shrine of St. Mary at Kirkstall; it has been broken and re-united with leaden rivets, and is represented half the size of the original in the annexed woodcut; also the leaden matrix of a seal, inscribed ✠ SIGILL : ADE : FILII : ROBERTI : represented in the

annexed woodcut, of the same size as the original. Several ancient iron keys have likewise been found in or near the principal gatehouse, two of which, in fine condition, are figured in the woodcut on the last page. Thoresby's museum contained several relics discovered here; amongst

which was a carving in alabaster of the entombment of our Saviour, supposed to have been an altar piece, found in the latter part of the 17th century; this was preserved for some years at Horsforth Hall, but now lost. The others consisted of a small iron box, perhaps a reliquary; a brass seal ring, bearing a Demi-Lion issuing from a tower; a large drinking glass; a vessel for salt; and an ornamented iron stirrup; the three last-named articles are stated to have belonged to the Abbot.<sup>1</sup>

I have in my possession three ancient carved oak

<sup>1</sup> Thoresby's Ducatus Leodiensis, p. 447, 487, 489.



panels, which I believe formed the front of a chest belonging to the Abbey, or some of its dependencies; they were discovered in a yard behind a cottage in Meanwood, where they had lain amongst a quantity of rubbish for many years. The monks of Kirkstall had possessions in this place, which is situate midway between the Abbey and the Granges of Headingley and Moor-Allerton, and the workmanship is undoubtedly of a date previous to the surrender of the House. These interesting objects are each twelve inches in length and eleven inches in breadth; the subjects represented are on one panel, the sun, radiated, surrounded by this inscription, *God save the Son that is bright*; on another panel, the moon, side faced, with a flowing beard, surrounded by this inscription, *God that is the King of might save the Moone*, and on the centre panel a talbot passant. There are also other specimens of oak carving at present fixed in the passage wall of the house of G. H. Nussey, Esq., at St. Ann's, Burley, which are stated on good authority to have been originally brought from the Abbey. They consist of two circular pieces, each bearing the arms of France and England, quarterly, within the garter, which is inscribed with the motto *HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE*, and surmounted with the royal crown; another piece, over these, bearing the initials E. R., doubtless for *Edwardus Rex*; and another bearing a large heraldic rose.

It is not surprising that numerous fragments of oak carving yet remain in the vicinity of these large monastic establishments, as they abounded with it. Three panels of this description, carved with half-length figures, were formerly to be seen in a house

near to Salley Abbey, from whence they are supposed to have been taken.

A large collection of charters relating to this Monastery were discovered a number of years ago in an old house in Chapel-Allerton; they relate almost exclusively to estates situate in that township, and many date from the latter part of the twelfth century, and have the seals entire. This discovery is recorded by Dr. Whitaker, who gives fac-simile engravings of two of these interesting documents, and copies of several others; he states that it had been conjectured they were taken by the last Abbot, on his retirement from office, to this part of his former domains; but it appeared to him more probable that the collection had been delivered to one of the first purchasers of the estates in this township, by whom they had been concealed and forgotten.<sup>1</sup> The latter is the more probable explanation of the matter, as it will be remembered that after the surrender of the Monastery it was believed the last Abbot took up his abode in the principal gate-house.

### *In Conclusion,*

the reader has had placed before him a brief history of the foundation, rise to opulence and fall, of one of those sacred temples reared by the zeal of our ancestors as a place of rest for individuals devoted to a religious life. The impression which the perusal of it will convey to a reflecting mind will be of the mutability of early grandeur; it is, however, in this respect, not a solitary instance; other temples,

<sup>1</sup> Loidia and Elmete, p. 123.

of greater magnificence and more extended fame, have fallen under the hand of the destroyer, and are only distinguishable by their mouldering remains. Its cells, at one time the abode of piety and learning, are now exposed to the summer sun and the winter's blast, while the visitor, as he wanders over hallowed precincts, hears but the echo of his own footsteps, accompanied by the murmur of the adjacent river.







## Appendix.

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### NOTE A, PAGE 9.

The Pulpit was placed against the south-west angle of the fifth column, in the north aisle, counting from the west,—*Chartularium Kirkstallense*, p. 11, *Wilson's MSS.*

### NOTE B, PAGE 12.

The Choir occupied the space under the crossing, with two bays of the structural nave, while the eastern arm, being wholly beyond the stalls, was the sanctuary. The choir pavement may yet be seen between the two bays on the south side. The windows in the middle of the Nave Aisle, viz., in the third Bay from the Tower, are of later date, introduced probably to throw light upon the Altars against the Choir Screen.—*Sir G. Gilbert Scott's Report*, pp. 6—8.

### NOTE C, PAGE 14.

A Bell now hanging in the steeple of St. Peter's, Kirkthorpe, near Wakefield, is believed to have once belonged to Kirkstall Abbey. The inscription upon it is in ornamental letters of the so-called "Longobardic" character, but which would perhaps be better designated as "mediæval capitals." The words are these:—✠ LAURENTIUS : IOHES : DE : BERDESAY : ABBAS AO : DI : MO. The first word is preceded by a cross, as was the case in almost all inscriptions of those days.

"Laurentius" is the name which the bell received at its benediction, or "baptism," as it has often been called. We may well believe that this very bell was in its early days known among the monks of Kirkstall by its name of "Laurence," for it seems highly probable that it once hung in the now ruined tower of Kirkstall Abbey. It bears the name of John de Bardsey, who was Abbot in 1396, and thus we have a pretty good notion of its date. Mediæval bells were very seldom

dated, but this bell has the beginning of a date, Mo. for millessimo, which has not been finished for want of room; or possibly the inscription may have been completed on another bell of the same set.—*Report Huddersfield Archæological and Topographical Association. Paper by the Rev. J. T. Fowler, 1869.*

NOTE D, PAGE 15.

The small Cell on the right of the steps leading from the South Transept to the East Dormitory, has had a vaulted ceiling, now plainly visible. It has two narrow lights looking into the Cloister Court, and also the remains of a stone sedilia on the West side, and a door on the East side. This may have been a penitential cell, or for the attendant on the before-named monk's dormitory.

NOTE E, PAGE 19.

*The surrender of the Abbey of Kirkstall with all its appurtenances into the hands of King Henry VIII., 22nd November, 1540.*

To all the faithful in Christ, to whom this present Writing shall come; We, John Ripley, Abbot of the Monastery of Kirkstall, in the County of York, and the Convent of the same place, everlasting greeting in our Lord. Know ye that we the afore-said Abbot and Convent, by our unanimous assent and consent with steady minds of our certain knowledge, and proper motion, and certain just and reasonable causes, spiritually moving us our souls and consciences, have freely and of our own accord given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant, surrender, deliver, and confirm, to the most Illustrious and Invincible Prince our Lord Henry the Eighth, by the grace of God King of England and France, Defender of the Faith, Lord of Ireland, and Supreme Head of the Church of England upon Earth. All our House and Monastery as also all the Scite, Ground, Circuit and Enclosure, and the Church of the same Monastery, with all our Debts, Chattells, and Moveables, belonging or appertaining to Us or the said Monastery, as well those we at present possess, or those which are due to Us or our said Monastery, either by bond or any other cause any way whatsoever, Likewise all and singular Manors, Lordships, Messuages, Gardens, Curtilages, Tofts,

Lands and Tenements, Meadows, Grazings, Pastures, Woods, Underwoods, Revenues, Reversions and Services, Mills, Passages, Knight Fees, Wards, Marriages, native Villains, with all their Followers, Liberties, Franchises, Privileges, Jurisdictions, Offices, Court Leets, and of Hundred, View of Frankpledges, Fairs, Markets, Parks, Warrens, Wine-cellars, Moors, Fisheries, Roads, Path, Wharfs, Wastes, Advowsons, Nominations, Presentations and Donations of Churches, Vicarages, Chapels, Chantries, Hospitals, and other Benefices whatsoever; Rectories, Vicarages, Chantries, Pensions, Procurations, Annuities, Tithes, Oblations, and all other and singular Emoluments, Profits, Possessions, Hereditaments whatsoever, as well within the said County of York, and in the County of Lancaster, and City of York, and elsewhere within the Kingdom of England, Wales, and the Marshes of the same, to Our said Monastery any way belonging, appertaining, annexed, or incumbent; and all sorts of Charters, Evidences, Bonds, Writings and Muniments, whatsoever, that belong or appertain to Us, or our said Monastery, or Lands, or Tenements, or the other Premises with their appurtenances, or to any Parcel thereof, in any manner, to have, hold, and enjoy our said Monastery, and the aforesaid Scite, Ground, Circuit and Precinct, and our Church aforesaid with all our Debts, Goods, and Chattels, as all and singular, our Manors, Lordships, Messuages, Lands, and Tenements, Rectories, Pensions, and other Premises whatsoever, with all and singular their appurtenances to the said most invincible Prince our King aforesaid, his Heirs, Successors, and Assigns, to the use of the said Lord our King his Heirs and Successors for ever, to this behalf and to all effect of Law that can or may thence follow. We as become Us do submit ourselves and our said Monastery with all and singular the Premises, and all that is Ours whatsoever way acquired, giving and granting and by these presents, We do give and grant to his said Royal Majesty, his Heirs, Successors, and Assigns, all and all sorts of full and free Faculty, Authority, and Power, to dispose of Us and our said Monastery, together with all and singular the Manors, Lands, and Tenements, Revenues, Reversions, and Services and singular the Premises with all their Customs and appurtenances whatsoever, and to dispose of, alienate, give, pass, or transfer them at his own free will and

pleasure to whatsoever uses it shall seem good to His Majesty, and we do ratify such Dispositions, Alienations, Donations, Conversions, and Translations, whatsoever way they shall be made by his aforesaid Royal Majesty. Moreover we permit to the end that all and singular the premises may have their due effect. And We do renounce and disclaim, as we have renounced and disclaimed, Elections, Suits, and Instances, and all other remedies and redresses whatsoever for ourselves or our Successors on pretence of the aforesaid Disposition, Alienation, Translation, and Conversion, and of the other premises that is or may be competent on account of Deceit, Dread, Fear, Ignorance, or other matter, wholly laying aside and quitting all Dispositions, Exceptions, Objections, and Allegations, openly publickly and expressly of our certain Knowledge and that of our own accord, and we do recede from them in this Writing. And We the Abbot, and Convent aforesaid, and our successors, will by these presents, warrant and for ever defend against all people to our aforesaid Lord the King, his Heirs, Successors, and Assigns, to the aforesaid Use our said Monastery and all the Scite, Ground, Circuit, Precinct, Mansion, and Church, aforesaid, and all and singular the Lordships, Manors, Messuages, Gardens, Curtilages, Tofts, Meadows, Grazings, Pastures, Woods, Underwoods, Lands, and Tenements, Revenues, Reversions, Services, and all and singular the Premises with all their Members and Appurtenances. In Testimony whereof We, the aforesaid Abbot and Convent, have with our own Hands in our name subscribed to this present Writing, and affixed our common seal to these presents. Given in our Chapter House, the 22nd Day of the month of November, in the thirty-first Year of the reign of our most Invincible Prince and Lord King Henry the Eighth, and in the Year of our Lord 1540.—*Chartularium Kirkstallense*, p. 150. *Wilson's MSS.*

NOTE F, PAGE 20.

It was thought that one of these apartments had been used as a Penitential Cell for minor breaches of monastic discipline, but Sir G. G. Scott gives it as a Staircase leading from the Cloister Court up to the East Dormitory. It is clear from the indentions in the north and south sides now to be seen, that the steps may be traced.



## NOTE G, PAGE 27.

John Ripley, elected Abbot 21st July, 1528, who surrendered the Abbey and all its Lands, Chattels, &c., to King Henry VIII., 22nd November, 1540, had an annual pension for life of £66 13s. 4d.; also Leonard Windres and Anthony Jackson £8 each; also Richard Bateson £7, Edward Heptonstall and John Harewood £6 13s. 4d. each; also William Lupton and Edward Sandall £6 each: also Paul Mason, Robert Himsworth, and Richard Wood £5 6s. 8d. each; also Thomas Wilson, Thomas Pepper, John Shaw and Thomas Wilson £5 each; and Henry Claughton £2, annual pensions for their lives. They were all living in 1553.

Several of the Abbots were summoned to Parliaments.—*Chartularium Kirkstallense*, p. 6. *Wilson's MSS.*

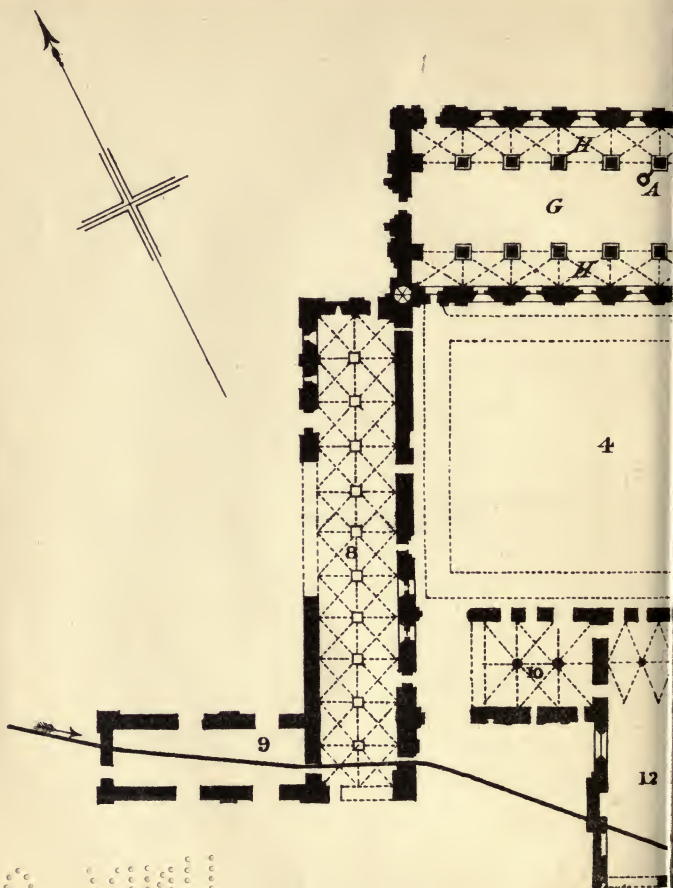
## NOTE H, PAGE 29.

Kirkstall Forge is supposed to be co-eval with the Abbey. Remains of Ancient Iron Workings and Furnaces found in the adjacent woods favour this belief. Thoresby says, writing of Kirkstall,—“but what is most remarkable here is the Iron Forge, which might serve Vulcan himself and his Cyclops to work in, and a Mill that Mr. Dickens of late years erected “(1680 A.D.) for slitting Iron into small Bars or Rods, by which “means there is a considerable manufacture of Nails in these “parts.”—*Ducatis Leodiensis*, p. 167.



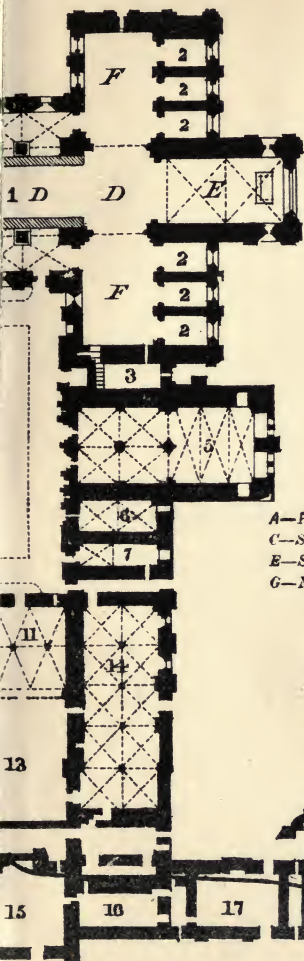


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GROUND PLAN  
OF  
KINSCARY ABBEY

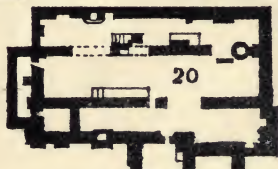




## REFERENCE.

- 1.—CHURCH
- 2.—CHAPELS
- 3.—SACRISTY
- 4.—CLOISTER COURT
- 5.—CHAPTER HOUSE
- 6.—ROOM FOR THE DEAD
- 7.—PENITENTIAL CELL
- 8.—CLOISTERS
- 9.—GRANARY
- 10.—COMMON ROOM
- 11.—OLD REFECTORY
- 12.—NEW DO.
- 13.—OPEN COURT
- 14.—ABBOT'S HALL
- 15.—KITCHENS
- 16.—BUTTERY
- 17.—ABBOT'S HOUSE
- 18.) ABBOT'S OFFICES
- 19.)
- 20.—HOSPITIUM

A—Pulpit (supposed position) B B—Enlarged Windows  
 C—Screen D D—Choir  
 E—Sanctuary FF—North & South Transepts  
 G—Nave H H—North and South Aisles



## SCALE OF FEET



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